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[J. HOLMES, TOOK'S COURT.]

## REVIEWS

*Poems.* By Samuel Rogers. London: Cadell, and Moxon.

THE modest title-page of this book conveys but an imperfect idea of the beauty it contains: here we have the best poems of Rogers, illustrated by the best designs of Stothard and Turner, forming together a volume which, for true elegance and pictorial fancy, is unequalled, in an age remarkable for its love of splendid books. The work, however, could not well be otherwise than beautiful: the poet is one of the finest judges of art; he knew better than to employ ordinary hands in furnishing scene and sentiment for his pages; and as he is an opulent bard, he was not compelled to accept sketches of which he did not approve. He could afford to select the best, and we believe, from what we know of artists, that the seventy scenes before us were picked out of a couple of hundred. The cost, of course, was immense, but it seems not to have been regarded: all the worse for the pocket of the poet, and all the better for the world. We have called this a book: it is something better; it is a gallery of the fairest pictures. The painters were aware of the fastidious taste and nice judgment which would examine and weigh their labours, and they wrought in a manner which transcends all their former exertions. Even 'Italy' cannot be compared with 'The Pleasures of Memory'; 'Jacqueline,' and 'The Voyage of Columbus.' Here we have more variety, and perhaps superior beauty; some of the landscapes of Turner are truly poetic and sublime, and the groups and single figures of Stothard, have more than his usual loveliness, simplicity, and truth. Nor have the engravers been unconscious of the importance of their tasks; Goodall, Finden, and Miller, have surpassed themselves. Yet, the poetry is adorned, and not overlaid, by the pencil; all is in true keeping and harmony, and the wish of the author to have his pages illustrated, is accomplished.

We shall now proceed to examine the works of the painters more in detail: Stothard is greatest in sweet and domestic things, and Turner shines most where imagination is called in to the aid of reality: the former has added a new grace to the Pleasures of Memory; the latter has introduced the sublime and the awful into the Voyage of Columbus. Scenes of loveliness or grandeur, which but dawned on the fancy of the poet, are brought out fuller and in greater lustre by the artists; and we think we are correct, when we say, that the pencil has sometimes studiously avoided scenes which poetry had raised into the regions of beauty, and preferred working upon hints and indications. This we mention as a matter worthy of praise, and also as an instance of the taste of the painters, for they could not but feel that scenes abounded,

which art could neither embellish nor render brighter.

The frontispiece is one of Turner's poetical Paradises, where flights of steps, bubbling fountains, waving groves, and antique statues, indicate that the muses are in the neighbourhood: Stothard follows with a Group of girls in a wood; some are seated on the flowers, and one—manifestly a little alarmed, is enjoying a gentle swing; had there been nine, we should have supposed them to be Stothard's Muses. The Gipsy Scene is very clever: Turner can make a landscape out of little: in a sheltered spot, the vagrants have turned their asses out to graze; raised a rude triangle over a fire, and suspended a pot, in which a venerable sibyl is preparing a stew, to which the neighbouring preserves and henroosts have doubtless contributed. As a contrast to this, Stothard has treated us to a love and music party in a wood; some are walking, some are sitting, and one, a youth, is playing so deliciously, that a lady gazes on him like one bewitched. From woods and brooks, Turner boldly wafts us to the Thames, puts us into a boat, and bids us admire the glories of Greenwich; the architecture of Wren, and the majestic river, harmonize well. All at once, the painter felt afraid that we might not like such everyday realities; he took a step to the "dread Lodore," and limned as the foaming stream flung itself down the cliffs into Derwent's clear mirror, where—

Each osier isle inverted on the wave  
Thro' morn's grey mist its melting colours gave,  
And o'er the cygnets' haunt the mantling grove  
Its emerald arch with wild luxuriance wove.

From The Pleasures of Memory, let us turn and look at 'Human Life.' The subject is introduced by Turner; but the beauty of his Lewellyn Hall will hardly be felt like the Hawking Scene, of Stothard, where lords and ladies are galloping to and fro, while high in air the heron seeks in vain to escape from his more active enemies, and Lady Jane Grey sits musing with Plato on her knee at an open window. But more charming still, is a lady reading and her lord listening; his cheek approaches hers; she seems almost yielding up the book—and he hears in her voice,

A thousand melodies unheard before.

Turner, however, soon asserts his own dignity. He saw a splendid picture in the following lines:—

The shepherd on Tornaro's misty brow,  
And the swart seaman sailing far below,  
Not undelighted watch the morning ray  
Purpling the orient, till it breaks away,  
And burns and blazes into glorious day.

It is sufficient praise to say, that the pencil has realized the verse. Nor can any one look without emotion on an armed boat impelled by oars along the Thames, with the headsman and his axe in the stern—about to go

On thro' that gate misnamed, thro' which before  
Went Sidney, Russell, Raleigh, Cranmer, More.

From the side of the Thames, with her gates of dread, and her gloomy towers, we are transported to the desert, where Turner's

pencil has delineated the long march of a caravan, overwhelmed by a whirlwind of burning sand. The sun looks dismally down, and the camels and the people gaze fearfully up. A very pretty domestic scene by Stothard, uniting the ardour of youth, with the devout feeling of old age, closes the illustrations of Human Life.

'Jacqueline' has a head-piece of Grape-gatherers, by Stothard, graceful and natural, but surpassed, we think, by the Lady's Bower, by Turner, which stands by quiet waters, among blowing flowers and murmuring bees; and also by the Falls of Valombré, beloved of Jacqueline—where it is twilight at noon—and

Where once a wild deer, wild no more,  
Her chaplet on his antlers wore,  
And at her bidding stood.

St. Julien's Cell, by Turner, is not so much to our taste; the scene is confused, nor is the human sentiment any better; prayers to heaven and amorous discourses are not in harmony; but let it pass. The girl pleading for her little brother at the knees of her father, is a happy thought and happy thing; we need not say that it is by Stothard.

The smaller poems have many interesting illustrations. There is a dance of villagers under an old scathed oak; a lady sitting, as the representative of verses 'On a Tear,' a bevy of wingless cupids on a marriage excursion, with the bride circled, flowers showering, and pipes playing—and a scene worth them all—the Alps at Day-break; the hunters with hound and horn have started the deer, and down they come full bound: all is so natural and so lively, that we almost imagine we hear the hallo of the huntsmen, and the view-note of the dogs.

We come now to 'The Voyage of Columbus,' the illustrations of which are the most truly original in the volume. Turner now takes the lead, and keeps it; his first sketch shows us Columbus departing on his wondrous voyage; the sails are filled, the sea seems consenting, and the people are shouting: the second is a fine piece of fancy—the intrepid mariner was becalmed, a superstitious fear came over his people, and they heard and saw enough to appal them—

Tricks not of men were mingling in the blast,  
And armed shapes of god-like stature passed!

The painter has given us a calm sea, a supernatural light playing over it, and those dread colossal shapes marching upon the waters. The third is perhaps the sublimest of all scenes; Columbus is standing calm and thoughtful on deck, his seamen are slumbering, the moon shines out, a curtain of mist is lifted up, and the promised land is shown to his anxious eyes. The figure reminds us of the inimitable statue of Michael Angelo, by Flaxman. The sketches of Stothard have something of a South American character in them, and one of them, representing Cora, is all simplicity and loveliness. They are wild and fanciful: here, a native princess is carried in a sort of rustic palanquin by two of her

subjects or lovers; and there a young adventurer has taken, like a duck, to the water, and is moving away in a small boat shaped like a sea bird.

As the pen cannot do anything like justice to the efforts of the pencil, our readers must not decide upon the beauty of indescribably fine things from our imperfect account of them. The excellence of true poetry cannot be embodied by art, neither can the excellence of art be described in either verse or prose. The best of these designs depart from the letter of the text a little, in order to obey its spirit; and this, to us, is a great merit. We congratulate Mr. Rogers on the publication of this fine work; we regret that he has no more poems to embellish.

**Gale Middleton.** By the Author of 'Brambletye House.' London: Bentley.

The annoyances that those who have made fortunes in trade must encounter, when they endeavour to acquire a station in the fashionable world, have been described by many able writers; yet the author of 'Gale Middleton' has contrived, by the grouping of his characters, to form a picture not altogether without originality. This, however, is the full extent of our praise. The old citizen, proud of his mercantile success—the wife deluded by the glitter of coronets and titles—the daughter a creature of circumstances, and the son a sickly sentimentalist—have been familiar to us under a thousand names;—the wife of the intriguing attorney—the mercenary *chaperone*—the dull duchess, and her still more stupid duke, are old acquaintances; in fact, the only attempt at a new character in the book, is that of the Irish fortune-hunter—and a more miserable failure never appeared in print. We can assure the author that bad English is not good Irish; and that the Cockney and Connemara dialects, which he has made identical, are essentially different.

Incident, as well as character, has come from the author's memory rather than his imagination. The main part of the story,—a son cursed, or blessed, with literary taste, refusing to take a share in his father's business—a nephew stepping into his place, and proving, in the end, a scoundrel—the son's dreams of fancy cured by a lady, whose strong sense is her best claim to his love: this is manifestly the repetition of the Osbaldestones, Di Vernon, and the villain Rashleigh;—for some minor events, the author of 'Pelham' might urge a claim—the flash scene in Petty France, Westminster, assuredly belongs to him by a grandfather's right, though probably he would be ashamed of the descendant in the second generation. All the materials of this novel are old; but the workmanship is new, and often ingenious.

In the conversation between the sturdy citizen and his daughter, after the family had removed to Portman Square, we meet with a new and amusing version of an old story:—

"La Pa! I wish you would never allude to Lawrence-Pountney Lane. Mamma, you know, cannot bear to hear the word mentioned, and says we ought to forget all about it."

"Spouse we did, dost think other folks would do the same? Shutting your own eye won't make the world blind, will't? For my part I'm proud on't, and even if you and your mother baint, you had better blab it at once, and

seem not to care about it. Didn't know Dick Swayles, didst? Bad health; obliged to go every year to Harrowgate and the watering-places; always lived at a boarding-house; first day at dinner rapped table for silence, stood up and addressed company: 'Ladies and gentlemen! my name's Dick Swayles, of Fenchurch Street, London, Russia broker. I have a sister who made a runaway match with a fellow of bad character, named Hacklestone; and a second cousin who was transported for swindling. That's all the harm I know of the whole family; and I mention it now to save you all the trouble of ferreting it out. If there's any good in me or mine, I'm sure you would not wish to hear of it, and I shall therefore say nothing upon the subject.'"

Tom Rashleigh,—a mean upstart, whose supposed connexion with a Sunday paper procures him admittance to the higher circles,—is a character of frequent occurrence in modern fashionable novels, but not as yet existing in real life. Indeed, we know of no Sunday paper that would receive as a contributor, and no female in a respectable station who would tolerate as a companion, one, of whose conversation the following is a specimen:—

"Pray, Duchess," he continued, "did you notice that beautiful cast of Minerva in the hall?"

"No!"

"Then I will speak about it to Lady Bridget O'Leary; she, you know, must have seen it, for she has always a cast in her eye."

"How can you be so illiberal? hers is by no means a squint, but an agreeable obliquity of vision. Her admirer, Jack Rutland, thinks it a beauty."

"Ay, her eye is like a bowl; its bias takes it out of the straight line, only that it may more certainly hit the Jack. *Appropos* of little deviations from the straight line, where is your friend, Lady Barbara Rusport?"

"Just now she was sitting at the window of the boudoir, gazing at the moon, of which she has always been fond."

"That I can understand, for there is a man in it."

There is some humour and a little coarseness in the account of the merchant-baronet returning home from a civic computation with his boon companions, and throwing into most "admirable confusion," the first party of *haut ton* that had deigned to visit his ambitious lady:—

"On descending from their vehicle in Portland Place, they found lying on the hall table some of the instruments belonging to the performers, when each, 'for madness ruled the hour,' the motion of the coach having completed the intoxication of the whole party, imitated the example of Sir Matthew, by snatching up a fiddle, followed him to the door of the supper-room, and burst into the midst of the assemblage, all scraping their violins in a dissonant screech, and yelling in chorus—

Boys, fill up a bumper, and let it go round.

"In the belief of many of the guests that this uncouth and boisterous pageant constituted a portion of the night's entertainment, and that the performers were destined to enact some species of masque, the first cries and faint screams of the females were rather indicative of surprise than dismay; while the rest preserved silence, in order to gather, if possible, the meaning of the scene. Meanwhile Sir Matthew, still plying his screeching fiddle and hiccoughing his bacchanalian choros, advanced to the head of the table, and, fixing his fuddled grapy eye upon her Grace of Harrowgate, stammered out—'What, hey, are you the moon-faced Duchess?

—hick! very glad to see—no—ar'n't glad at all—not my doing—all Meg's—hick! But now you're come I'll give 'ee a buss, not—notwith—withoutstand—hick!"

"The first person that seemed to comprehend Sir Matthew's real plight, was the Honourable Augustus Fortescue Sidney Clavering, a sprig of nobility and a cornet of dragoons, who, after peering at him through a jewelled eye-glass, ejaculated with a distasteful look, and in an effeminate lisping voice—"Ath I hope to be thaved! the nathty fellow'th beathly drunk!" This had already been discovered to be the case with the Baronet's companions, who, in the fond, maudlin blindness of intoxication, had offered to salute some of the mummy-like dowagers, and roused scraggy countesses, occasioning a shrieking, dismay, and confusion, which it would be difficult to describe. In the midst of this hubbub the reeling Alderman put his audacious arm round the fat throat of the Duchess, and attempted to salute her cheek, when her Grace, struggling to avoid the indignity, escaped from the embrace, leaving in his arm not only her *togues* and its splendid ornaments, but the entire wig that concealed the ravages of time upon her head."

In the conclusion of the tale, the hero, a sentimental Radical, in addition to a wife and fortune, gets the novel dignity of President of a Temperance Society: the author perhaps has joined one of these institutions—a circumstance which might account for the poverty of invention displayed in his volumes.

**Turner's Annual Tour; with Wanderings by the Seine,** by Leitch Ritchie. London: Longman & Co.

Or the illustrations of this work, we have spoken under the head of Fine Arts; we shall now, therefore, confine ourselves to a few pleasant extracts from Mr. Ritchie's contributions. There were many places visited in these wanderings, which have associations in the minds and hearts of Englishmen. We shall first give Mr. Ritchie's account of Harfleur, where Henry the Fifth disembarked, on that memorable expedition which is yet, perhaps, the crowning glory of our military history.

"At the port of Eure, where there now stands a farm house, there was formerly a chapel, built in the year 1294, on the edge of the sea, and dedicated to Notre Dame des Neiges. The anchorage at the bottom of the walls was chiefly frequented by small vessels loaded with glass, the feudal duty on which was exacted in rather an odd manner. The merchant was required to present one of the largest of his glasses to the provost, who in turn filled it with wine, which he gave him to drink. If the custom-payer was able to swallow the beverage without drawing breath, it was all very well—he returned the empty glass, and the affair was over; but if unfortunately he paused in the draught, either to enjoy its flavour or to digest his disgust, he was obliged to pay two glasses. It is said that mariners in general consented at once to pay the second glass rather than drink the provost's wine."

"This antique port is now filled up by the sands washed continually by the action of the tide from the Point of the Hoc. It was here that, in the middle of the seventeenth century, a seventy-gun ship called the Rouen was lost in the quick-sands. There are persons now living who remember seeing the end of one of her masts above the surface of the water."

"The chapel of Notre Dame des Neiges stood formerly on an island, although there is now not the slightest trace of any separation from the

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rest of the land; but when the traveller has reached the further side of the Point, the changes that have taken place in the aspect of the coast are on a scale so great as to strike him with awe. While wandering along the embouchure of the little river Lézarde, in vain he endeavours to discover the roads where the navy of our Henry V. once floated in triumph. He ascends the beautiful and quiet stream, in search of the place which Monstrelet calls 'le souverain port de Normandie,' and arrives at length at a small, neat inland town, without harbour, without fortifications, and surrounded with rich pastures instead of basins, filled with grazing cattle instead of ships. This is Harfleur.

"Harfleur was once the Havre of the Seine. The merchant-ships of Spain and Portugal delivered there their cargoes free of duty; and, besides being a great *entrepôt* of commerce, its home manufactures, particularly of cloth, were held in great estimation. So late as the beginning of the sixteenth century the ships of Harfleur sailed beyond the tropics!"

The following contains some curious information:—

"A few centuries ago there were more than twenty thousand lazarettos in Europe. In the fourteenth century, in the domains of the Seigneur de Courcy alone, there were ten of these leproseries; and in all France, there were supposed to be more than two thousand. In Dauphiny there was one for nobles alone; and, near Paris, one for females of royal blood. Vanity of vanities! Let us devote a moment to recalling the ceremony which cut off alike the royal, noble, and plebeian leper from the society of his fellow-men.

"Clothed in a pall, the dead-alive stood at the steps of the church at the appointed hour, the people forming a wide circle round him, and gazing with dread and horror on the victim thus pointed out by the wrath of Heaven. The clergy of his parish then appeared, walking in procession, and the leper followed them into the church, and laid himself down on a bier, set round with lighted tapers. The service for the dead was then performed, with the usual chanting of prayers, sprinkling of holy water, and flinging of incense; and when the unhappy wretch was thus religiously dead, he was taken out of the town to the solitary hut appointed for his habitation.

"A pall hung above the door, surmounted by a cross, before which he fell upon his knees; and the priest then commenced an exhortation, enjoining him to the virtue of patience, recalling to his memory the sufferings of Jesus Christ, and pointing out to him that heaven above his head, where there are no tears and no lepers, but where all are for ever sound, for ever pure, and for ever happy. He then took off his coat, and assumed the leper's dress, and the clacket, or rattle, by which he was for the future to give notice of his approach, that his fellow-men might fly from the polluted path. The priest then pronounced the interdictions prescribed by the ritual.

"I forbid thee to go abroad without thy leper's dress.

"I forbid thee to go abroad with naked feet.

"I forbid thee to pass through any narrow street.

"I forbid thee to speak to any one except against the wind.

"I forbid thee to enter any church, any mill, any fair, any market, any assembly of men whatever.

"I forbid thee to drink, or to wash thy hands, either in a well or a river.

"I forbid thee to handle any merchandise before thou hast bought it.

"I forbid thee to touch children, or to give them any thing."

"The priest then gave him his foot to kiss,

throw a handful of earth upon his head, and, having shut the door of the hut on the outcast, recommended him to the prayers of the bystanders, who immediately dispersed.

"The goods accorded to the leper were safe from robbers; his vineyard, his cow, his sheep, might remain without a keeper; for no extremity of hunger could tempt any one to put forth his hand upon the property of the accursed. His former clothes, his house, his furniture, were burnt to ashes; and if his wife chose to follow the footsteps of his despair—which was not rarely the case—she also was devoted when living to the leper's doom, and when dead, her ashes were refused a resting-place in consecrated earth. In consecrated earth? What have we said? It is the relic which sanctifies the place; and wherever were thrown the remains of that devoted wife, there was holy ground!"

The accessories, as an artist would call them, are not unfrequently the most interesting objects in Mr. Ritchie's pictures. Here is an account of Agnes Sorel, the lady of beauty, whose tomb he visited at Jumièges:

"This admirable woman, unambitious of acting the part of a heroine herself, was satisfied with making her lover a hero. 'If honour,' said she, 'cannot lead you from love, love at least shall lead you to honour!' There is something akin to this sentiment in that glorious stanza of one of our old poets:

"Yet this inconstancy is such  
As you too shall adore;  
I could not love thee, dear, so much,  
Loved I not honour more!"

"Agnes Sorel is described by the chroniclers of the time as 'la plus belle des belles'—the loveliest of the lovely, and of a sweet, gentle, meek, and holy disposition. She was charitable to excess, kind, generous, and forgiving. Her heart was peculiarly open to religious impressions; and, when summoned by the angel of death in her mid career—in the flush of prosperity, the pride of place, the full glow of a beauty without rival and without comparison—the single error of her life presented itself in the aspect of a mortal sin, and she wept tears of remorse for that heroic love to which, perhaps, her country owed its freedom. In vain had the blood of the Maid of Orleans flowed in the field—in vain her godlike spirit ascended to heaven on the flames of her funeral pile—had not Agnes remained, the guardian angel of her royal friend, to inspire him with honour through the vehicle of passion, and infuse the enthusiasm of kingly virtue into his soul with the kisses of her woman's love.

"Great pains is taken by the courtly historian Chartier to disprove what he calls the scandal that was abroad respecting Agnes and the king; and he even mentions a list of persons—all honourable men—who had inquired formally into the proofs, and declared themselves satisfied of the innocence of the parties. \* \* \*

"The time at last came when this radiant being was to vanish from the eyes of her royal worshipper. When Charles was at Jumièges, after the capture of Rouen, Agnes inhabited the little manor of Menil, at a short distance from the abbey; and the path may yet be seen—or conjectured—by which he threaded his way through the wood to his mistress's house. Here she was struck by a mortal sickness, almost in the arms of her lover, and in the midst of that career of glory which she had incited him to pursue. Some say that she died in childbirth; others that she fell a victim to the jealousy of the Queen: the question matters not; her high mission was fulfilled, her destiny completed, and she died.

"Her heart was buried in the chapel of the Virgin at Jumièges, beneath a lofty and magnificent mausoleum marble. Agnes herself was represented kneeling on both knees, and offering a heart to the Mother of Mercy. At the foot of

the tomb was another heart in white marble. All this has vanished."

The sordid and servile baseness of what follows, harmonizes badly with the subject; but it is too good an anecdote to be passed over.

"The monks of Loches, whom she had largely endowed with her wealth, received her remains with respect and gratitude; but Charles VII. was no sooner dead (twelve years after), than, in the true monachial spirit, they were seized with religious scruples about having given harbour in their holy ground to the mistress of a defunct king. The successor, Louis XI., they knew, besides, had been his father's bitterest enemy, and openly in arms against him; and no doubt he had already given proofs of that ardent devotion which afterwards loaded even his hat-band with medals of the saints. They therefore petitioned with one voice for liberty to remove the contamination to some less sanctified grave.

"It is hard to say what were the real thoughts of Louis XI. upon this application—of the friend and crony of Tristan l'Hermite, of him who cut off the heads of his nobles, or shut them up in iron cages, and who hung his less distinguished subjects, like acorns, upon the trees of Plessis. Louis was perhaps a man in some parts of his nature, just as he was an excellent king in almost everything but his attachment to the use of the rope and the axe. At all events, the reply was, that the desire of the said monks was only devout and reasonable; and that, on giving up the property bequeathed to them by the deceased, they were at liberty to do what they chose with her body. A new light broke upon the holy men at this answer. A woman who had given two thousand crowns of gold to the Abbey of Loches, could not have been so very wicked as people said; and to this donation poor Agnes had added tapestries—and not only tapestries, but pictures—and not only pictures, but jewels. Wicked! Why she was positively a saint! What devil could have put it into their heads to think of removing her ashes? They determined, however, to make up for the error by redoubling their tender and respectful cares; and accordingly the Lady of Beauty lay undisturbed for more than three hundred years, when the revolution burst forth, and almost made up for its Vandalism in destroying the monuments, by scattering the monks who guarded them over the face of the earth."

And now a word, in all friendliness, with Mr. Ritchie. We have often enough expressed our opinion of him as a writer, and are not inclined to abate one sentence of our commendation, but, we must hint, that he talks occasionally too much like Sir Oracle; "Enough—I have said it," seems to be authoritative and conclusive with him. There is, in this, a want of respect and courtesy towards the public. If a writer entertains opinions widely different from all other informed persons, let him announce them on fitting occasions, and assign his reasons. When we are told that "Beattie will be admired on the north side of the Tweed, long after Burns is forgotten," we are startled as by a strange literary heresy, and we desire to know on what the assertion is founded. Again, speaking of the Jews, Mr. Ritchie observes—

"The pawnbrokers of our day in England are better off. Their twenty per cent. is much more extravagant interest, according to the relative value of money, than the forty-five per cent. of the Jews at the time we speak of. They have no occasion, besides, to dread a revision of the law which gives up the substance of the poor into their hands; for this simple reason, that it is the interest of the rich to keep the poor



dependent. A rich man exclaims against the villany and impiety of those who *illegally and usuriously* seek more than five per cent. from him for a temporary loan; but he knows very well, at the same moment, that his poorer neighbour, who gives the bed from under him as a security, must pay twenty per cent. without any lawful pretext for grumbling. The odd thing is, that the security of the poor is much more complete than that of the rich; for the pawnbroker advances not a penny till he has the pledge in his possession! Money, in our opinion, should be under no more restriction than any other merchantable commodity; but if the mania of legislation will interfere, why tax the temporary necessities of the poor with twenty per cent., and those of the rich with only five per cent.? But, as we have said, there is no hope on this subject. Even the critics, who will bestow upon our lucubrations a modicum either of charitable praise or of too just censure, will avoid, with a blush or a frown, the *ungentel* topic. No matter! Born in the middle rank ourselves, we love the poor from sheer vulgarity. If our destiny had been higher, we should have slighted them through ignorance; if lower, through a mean and pitiful pride."

Now, what does all this signify? Are not the critics born in the middle ranks as well as Mr. Ritchie? why then should they either blush or frown at the topic as *ungentel*? If we were to blush or frown, it would be at hearing a serious subject treated in so hasty and superficial a manner. The usury laws, all informed persons admit, are very absurd; but a law that should forbid the pawnbroker to take more than five per cent. would be far more so, for it would at once close his doors; he could not carry on his business at such a rate of interest. The truth is, there is no law that can compel men to lend money at five, or any other rate per cent.; if money be scarce, the borrower must pay high for it, and the law upon the subject only obliges him to do so by an indirect instead of a direct manner,—by a costly instead of a cheap; by annuity, or a bonus, instead of a per-centage, and further, to pay for the risk run in evading the law. Neither does the present law compel the rich man to pay five per cent., for we all know that he can at this moment raise any amount he pleases at three and a half or four; but the law, with its form and penalties, does prevent the pawnbroker from charging to the poor more than twenty per cent., and would, therefore, be unjust, not to the poor, but to the pawnbroker, if the rate of interest allowed were not so high as to satisfy him; but it is not, on a broad scale, too high, or we should have underlending pawnbrokers, as we have undersellers in all other trades. The whole passage is indeed so full of fallacies and assumptions, that its refutation was not perhaps worth the words we have wasted on it; but it seems written in a bad spirit, and ought not to pass without comment.

*Franco Allegri, Racconto delle Avventure Proprie e d'altri Memorabili Fatti, del Secolo XVI.*—[*Franco Allegri, a Narrative of Personal Adventures, and other Memorable Facts of the Sixteenth Century.*] Milan: Truffi; London, Treutell & Co.

The anonymous author of this *Racconto* appears to have forfeited a celebrity to which he was entitled by his respect for the now obsolete Horatian precept of locking up a MS. for nine years. Although the modern

Italian has restricted the writing-desk imprisonment of his work to six years, even this imperfect compliance has, it seems, lost him the credit of being the first introducer of the modern novel into his native land, for these volumes were written, he tells us, in 1826, before Manzoni had given his '*Promessi Sposi*' to the world. Still, however, he retains an incontestable degree of Italian originality, inasmuch as he has fashioned himself, not upon Sir Walter Scott, but upon Le Sage, and so far imitated the witty Frenchman's amusing Gil Blas, that he has given us the history, told in the first person, of a low-born, uneducated, and tolerably unprincipled man, thrown into a variety of strange situations. Franco Allegri is the deserted child of a gipsy, adopted first by a Bergamese peasant, then by a Milanese innkeeper—goes through abundance of adventures in Italy—is employed in the courts of Mary Queen of Scots and of Catherine of Medicis—accompanies Henry III. of France to Poland, &c. Were the execution of all this equal to its conception, the book would be delightful; but, unluckily, our author has neither Le Sage's wit, nor Scott's power of embodying and resuscitating the mighty dead. The work is, nevertheless, by no means devoid of merit, as we shall offer the reader the means of judging, selecting our translations from the Italian scenes.

Marianna, the Milanese landlady, determines to place her gipsy foundling in a barber's shop, in order to fit him for service.

In the choice of a shop Marianna long hesitated, despising the little celebrity of some masters, and fearing the dissolute manners of others. But, seeing that there was no middle course, she resolved to place me in the most famous of all, trusting in my docility and in her own advice to save me from its dangers. The master was a Frenchman, a Parisian, named Philippe, but called, by way of distinction, the *Monsù*. . . .

In the barber's shop all was jest, sport, and gallantry. It stood in one of the principal streets, through which were constantly passing all who sought to display elegance and beauty, and to which all foreigners resorted, so that from the novelty of the concourse it became quite a spectacle. In the very long hours of idleness that remained to the boys (all French except the narrator), and in which the master was absent, their whole business was to stand at the door, jeering the passers by, jesting with the prettiest girls, or serving customers in amorous embassies—the which customers, all young, if not in constitution, yet in fashion, contributed mainly to this licence, since they endured, as French gaiety, the most flagrant impertinence, laughing and jesting with these idle vagabonds; nor did the haughtiest nobles, who would have kicked the malapert plebeian that had dared to press into their neighbourhood at a festival, refuse to stand arguing with them upon taste and beauty. It is true that those rogues of boys more than once provoked anger; but, whether they received, in consequence, abuse or blows, in place of showing resentment they managed, by a new witticism, to turn wrath to laughter. . . .

I was presented by a gentleman to the *Monsù*, and was courteously received. My duties were assigned me, such as sweeping the shop, cleaning the basins, folding the linen, and taking care that the water never cooled, and I remained alone with my comrades. Their deportment changed in an instant; and, although I did not understand their language, I perceived that I was the object of their mockery. I pretended not to notice this, convinced that it could not last long. In fact, I soon found means to gain

their good-will by the help of my kind landlady, who never let me want for anything. She displayed her generosity upon this occasion; for, having learned the state of affairs, she daily sent me, at an hour when she knew the *Monsù* was absent, a dish of hot victuals, and a bottle of wine. Only once had I the trouble of offering my shop-fellows a share, and that was the first time; afterwards they helped themselves without invitation. This produced the best effect, turning their sneers into caresses; and, that I might be their confidant, they taught me French.

One of the frequenters of this shop is Maestro Giovanni, a great singer and composer; who, taking a fancy to our hero, instructs him in his own art so successfully, that Franco now accompanies the *Maestro* to concerts, and sings comic duets with him. In this career he attracts the notice of a Princess, with an old husband, and a jealous Spanish lover. The *Monsù* conducts the affair, and two attempts at a private interview between the great lady and the shop-boy fail.

The third time the lady's maid introduced me into a magnificent saloon, where sat the Princess; who, at that moment, appeared to me a divinity. But, scarcely had she addressed a word to me, when a noise was heard in the next room, whence her terrified maid came to give notice, that the Spanish Caballero would break in. "Hide this one," answered the Princess. But I, hearing some Spanish words that I did not understand, turned towards the voice, and saw an officer, sword in hand, rush furiously in, and make for me. Without observing or listening to anything more, I took to the door opposite that by which he had entered, and darted headlong across several rooms, not knowing whither I was going, and with my ears stunned by the threats of the madman who was pursuing me. At length, finding a staircase, I attempted to spring down it, but, after the first few steps that I took with my feet, I rolled down the remainder. All bruised and smashed, unable to move, I expected to be murdered, when, lifting my head, I saw my persecutor standing motionless and looking at me. He paused a while thus, then turning back, exclaimed, "Thanks, oh! most compassionate staircase, that hastily punished this scoundrel, and spared my good sword the stains of such vile blood." So saying, he sheathed his sword, and walked up again triumphantly.

After awhile, the Princess, having freed herself from her ex-favourite the Spaniard, by getting him sent upon active service, determines to engage her intended new favourite, the barber's apprentice, as her daughter's music-master, and in this capacity he is to be presented to the Prince for his approbation.

The Prince made me wait nearly half an hour in a passage, where there was no seat; and, at last, I was told that his Excellency allowed me to enter. I had imagined that I should find him in the midst of business, surrounded by papers, and attended by his secretaries; but what I met with, was very unlike my expectations. The *Monsù* was alone with him in a tiny little room, chuck full of pots of ointments, essences, and colours, more in number, perhaps, than were to be found in our shop. Two small tables were covered with these things, and a repository in the wall, as well as a shelf that occupied one side, were full of them. There were, moreover, combs, hair pencils, razors, scissors, with everything else that could be useful for the natural or artificial wants of the body. A thousand odours mingled, forming a whole, rather disgusting than grateful. The Prince sat amidst these important objects with the gravity of a scholar amidst his books, or of



a Secretary of State amidst his dispatches. I entered; and, placing myself in a corner, made numerous bows, which were neither returned nor heeded; so I stood there, against the wall, waiting till I should be called.

While the *Monsi* made an end of adorning the skeleton before me, I had leisure to observe how circumstances change the aspects of men. That master of mine, so respected, so feared by his dependents, no longer discovered a trace of his natural arrogance. To the sneers and vituperations of the nobleman, whose words, indeed, were nothing else, he constantly replied with the most submissive humility; and, I believe, he would have humbled himself, even under a cudgel. . . . When his task was perfected, he bowed even to the earth, kissed his employer's hand, and went away, pretending not to see me.

The Prince, now completely washed and dressed, proceeded towards the door, arriving at which, without looking at me, and as if in the act of pursuing his way, he addressed me thus:—"Art thou he that is to teach my child?" I answered with a profound bow, "Your Excellency, that honour—" "Dost understand music?" he interrupted, without listening to me, and to this question he waited for an answer. "I have studied it for six years," I replied, "with some profit, under Maestro Giovanni, according to the method of the very celebrated Cordovero." "And why," he rejoined, "is not Maestro Giovanni engaged, who must know more of the matter than thou?" Had it been lawful to say all that presented itself to my mind, I could have given good reasons for my being preferred to the old *Maestro*. I thought it better to confine myself to a simple "But—"; and he, completely turning his back upon me to leave the room, said—"Mind, I understand music, and shall know if thou teach her absurdities."

Our hero next seeks his fortune as a singer at the court of the Duke of Ferrara; and making acquaintance, by the way, with a company of street musicians, obtains from Lauretta, a pretty woman of their party, a recommendation to a *Cameriere di Corte*, or Ducal Valet. Upon this important personage he waits by appointment:—

I found, to my surprise, that a servant was attended by many servants, and was master of a splendid mansion. I waited long in the valet's ante-chamber, and then I was introduced. He was at table with a fine capon and a large bottle of wine before him. "Art thou," said he, "Lauretta's protégé?"—"The same, Sir," I replied. "Know," he went on, "that I could not refuse her request, but am as ill disposed as possible towards the whole tribe of you. We are pestered all day with famished beggars, who call themselves musical *virtuosi*, because our good man of a Duke has a tenderness for such, but who turn out to be sheer ignoramuses, come hither to take him in. I am willing to believe you are not one of this sort, so let's hear your voice."

This compliment, which was not pronounced very fluently, inasmuch as words alternated with great mouthfuls and frequent glasses of wine, almost froze my blood.

The poor songster, after some difficulties, for which he is impertinently taunted, obeys the command, and is lucky enough to please the Valet, who, when his repast is ended, takes him to the *Maestro di Corte*. Here he is less fortunate, the *Maestro* being a rival and an enemy of Franco's master, Maestro Giovanni. In consequence of this, and of his having neglected to bribe him, the Ferrarese *Maestro* avoids seeing him for several days, then admits him, tells him the Duke will hear him that morning, gives him, as

what he is to sing, a very difficult piece of music, as different as possible from what he is used to, prevents him from studying it, and takes him to court:—

Here I was introduced into a room where many servants were walking about, and more passing and repassing. The *Maestro* got away from me without my observing it, nor did I see him again for four whole hours.

At length, after having thus long tried my patience, the *Maestro* re-appeared, and beckoned me to follow him. We entered a room where the Duke was gravely seated, with his Duchess by his side, the courtiers standing in great numbers around. I was stationed in front of their Highnesses, the *Maestro* by my side, the musicians who were to accompany, behind me. At first, my voice trembled from internal agitation. The *Maestro*, instead of encouraging, looked hard at me, and shook his head. At this stroke, my breath began to fail; but, when the Duke, perhaps taking my confusion for shameless ignorance, composed his countenance into an ironical smile, my sight grew dim, and I was forced to stop. Then the laughter became general, and in the midst of it his Highness withdrew, followed by all his court.

The *Maestro* and the musicians only remained. Upon the Duke's departure, he assumed his master's lofty demeanour, and said: "Go, boy, there is no bread for you here, and I advise you to change your trade. You are strong, and it is a shame, that, instead of working, you should give yourself up to the profession of a vagabond. Go, and remember to thank Heaven that his Highness has not rewarded your insolence as it deserves." A servant then took me by the arm, and led me like a blind man into the street.

The scenes of more courtly pretension are, we think, far inferior to these, and we shall therefore here end our translations.

*Crayon Sketches.* By an Amateur. Edited by T. S. Fay. 2 vols. New York: Conner & Cooke.

We are indebted to Mr. Tegg for these volumes—not, be it understood, in the way of trade, but of courtesy—and, therefore, we beg leave to return him our best thanks.

These Sketches appeared originally in the *New York Mirror*, and, in plain sincerity, we must acknowledge, that we should have been well pleased had they appeared in the *Athenæum*—few of our periodicals could furnish two pleasanter volumes,—the papers are light, humorous, or satirical, with an occasional touch of sentiment and pathos, just as chance and the moment may have inclined the writer; and they are interspersed with clever criticism of the drama, and theatrical portraits of the more eminent actors both English and American. The writer, it appears, resided some time in this country; and, therefore, our first extract shall be a sketch of a London Citizen, and a London Fog, that our readers may understand at once the good-tempered skill of the artist.

"It was on the evening of a dull, damp, dreary, weary, melancholy, miserable day, towards the latter end of November, when Titus Dodds, esq., of Cornhill, merchant, closed his counting-house door, and proceeded homeward to his residence, No. 42, Brooke-street, High Holborn, in quest of palatable nutriment. The prospect before him was any thing but alluring. The streets were greasy and slippery, the half-washed houses looked lonely and cheerless, while the Bank, the Mansion House, the Exchange, and other awkward and well-smoked edifices, as seen by the equivocal light of four

o'clock, presented a peculiarly grim and repulsive appearance. The chilly, drizzly atmosphere penetrated to the very marrow of the shivering citizens as they crawled along to their respective domiciles. . . .

"But it is time some explanation was entered into of the character and habits of the hero of this history.

"Mr. Titus Dodds was a plain, honest, kind-hearted, sensible-enough sort of man. When a census of the population of the metropolis was taken, he counted one; but excepting on those occasions, never attempted to cut a figure in the world. If one asked his opinion respecting the domestic and foreign policy of the cabinet, he used to reply, that he was no politician; if another requested his views upon controversial points of religion, he would answer, that he was no theologian; and if any one desired to know his opinion concerning the probability of finding a passage round the North Pole, he would say, he thought it likely it might be discovered some time or other, adding, however, by way of qualification, that it was a great chance if it ever were. Holding these inoffensive tenets respecting law, divinity, politics, and science, and professing a total ignorance of poetry and the fine arts, he managed to get through the world with considerable ease and comfort to himself, and little or no inconvenience to his neighbours. . . .

"Such was the appearance which Mr. Dodds presented to the superficial observer; and such indeed was his real character, as far as it went; but beneath all this placidity and quiescence lurked strong passions—ardent desires—unconquerable longings. It seemed as if all the sharp points of his character had flown off and concentrated themselves under one particular head. The fact is, Mr. Dodds liked his dinner. . . .

"He was none of your showy, superficial fellows, that dilate with counterfeit rapture upon the pleasures of the table merely to gain credit for superior discrimination and delicacy of palate; he was none of your gastronomic puppies, that prate everlastingly of the impropriety and horrid vulgarity of brown meats and white wines—of the indelicacy of cheese, and the enormity of malted liquors. No—he was a man who had a real, simple, and sincere love for the birds of the air, the beasts of the field and the forest, and the fish of the seas, rivers, lakes, and fresh-water streams; and one gifted at the same time by nature, with an eminently lively sense of the pleasing essences and grateful flavours which are capable of being extracted therefrom. . . .

"To a philanthropist—to a man with an enlarged love for the human species, a Howard or a Shelley, it would have been a pleasing sight to to see Mr. Titus Dodds, after the honourable fatigues of the day, sit down to what he most worshipped—ducks stuffed with onions. . . .

"Titus Dodds (as has been previously mentioned,) was a man in easy circumstances, yet he had not often ducks for dinner. If any are curious to know the reason, it will be a sufficient reply—at least to the matrimonial portion of the querists—to state that Mr. Dodds was a married man. Mrs. Dodds was by no means a contradictory or contumacious helpmate; but still she had a will of her own; and perfectly detested any thing low. Touching the onions, she was peculiarly pathetic in her remonstrances, inasmuch as they frequently brought tears to her eyes; but Titus was firm, and occasionally carried his point. He had succeeded in doing so on the day on which our story commences (and ends,) and the last words that ran along the passage, as he closed the door after him in the morning, were—"precisely at five."

"But to return to Mr. Dodds, whom we left just entering Cheapside. Scarcely had he proceeded as far as Bow Church, when the dense fog, which had been brooding over the city for the last twelve hours, and resting itself on the

tops of the more elevated buildings, came tumbling down all at once, bringing with it the whole of that day's smoke, which had been vainly endeavouring, since the first fire was lighted in the morning, to ascend to its usual station in the atmosphere. As soon as this immense funeral pall was spread over the city, things fell, as was naturally to be expected, into immediate and irremediable confusion. Pedestrian bore violently down upon pedestrian, and equestrian came in still more forcible contact with equestrian. Cart overturned cart—coach ran against coach—shafts were broken—wheels torn off—windows stove in; passengers shouted and screamed, and the language of the drivers, though copious and flowing, became characterized rather by energy than elegance. But a London fog cannot be described. 'To be appreciated it must be seen,' or rather felt. \* \* \* There is a kind of light, to be sure, but it only serves as a medium for a series of optical delusions; and for all useful purposes of vision, the deepest darkness that ever fell from the heavens is infinitely preferable. A man perceives a coach a dozen yards off, and a single stride brings him among the horses' feet,—he sees a gas-light faintly glimmering (as he thinks) at a distance, but scarcely has he advanced a step or two towards it, when he becomes convinced of its actual station by finding his head rattling against the post; and as for attempting, if you get once mystified, to distinguish one street from another, it is ridiculous to think of such a thing.

"At the end of Cheapside there was a grand concussion of wheeled vehicles, and the danger of being jostled, overturned, and trodden under foot, confused, unsettled, and perturbed Mr. Dodds's local ideas considerably, so that, instead of holding his way along Newgate-street, in a westerly direction, he pointed his nose due north, (up Aldersgate-street) and followed it according to the best of his ability.

"'They will be overdone!' soliloquized Titus; and he groped vigorously forward, until, as the clock struck the appointed hour of five, he found himself at the Angel at Islington, just about as far from his domicile as when he left his counting-house. There are limits to the power of language, and therefore I shall leave Mr. Dodds's state of mind, on making this singular discovery, to the imagination of the reader. But there was no time to be lost. He struck his raton on the pavement, wiped the perspiration from his forehead, inquired out, as his nearest way, St. John's street Road, and plunged at once into its mysterious recesses. 'Twere painful and vain to tell of his dismal and dubious wanderings in those complex regions which lie between the aforesaid road and Gray's Inn; suffice it to say, that he at length succeeded in reaching the latter, and began once more to entertain hopes of seeing his home again. \* \* \*

"Seven minutes had now elapsed since the authoritative voice of St. Giles's had bawled out to the surrounding districts, 'six o'clock,' and Mrs. Dodds began to be seriously alarmed at the most unaccountable absence of Mr. Dodds, so much so, indeed, that faint visions of the unbecomingness of widow's caps kept involuntarily flitting across her imagination. Being a notable, prudent personage, she placed her smelling-bottle on the table, laid her white muslin-cambric handkerchief beside it, and arranged the easy arm-chair at a convenient distance so that she might not be found altogether unprepared, in case it was announced to her that she was a desolate woman. Just at this juncture, however, the street-door opened, and a heated, flurried, perspiring piece of animated nature, bearing a striking resemblance to Mr. Dodds, rushed in, and made the best of its way to the drawing-room, but nothing (at least to the purpose) met its eager glance.

"'They can never have eaten them,' ex-

claimed Dodds, (for it was he)—'Oh no, no, no!—they could not, would not, durst not!'—and, without tarrying for the slow medium of servants, in order to effect a communication with Mrs. Dodds, away he sallied, in order to know the worst at once, in quest of his stray lamb—or, to speak with greater agricultural precision, his ewe, for she was long past the flowery days of lambhood.

"'Titus Dodds!' cried Mrs. Dodds, 'Titus Dodds, where have you been?'

"'It matters not,' replied Titus, in a tremulous voice, 'it matters not! I suppose all is over, and there is nothing but cold meat in the house—well, well!'

Our next extract will be from a pleasant paper written in a different vein:—

"Respectability! Mysterious word! indefinite term! phantom! Who will presume to say authoritatively what thou art? \* \* \* Where is the lexicographer gifted with powers to define thee accurately, satisfactorily, so that the general voice shall cry aloud, 'that is the meaning of the word,' and every individual whisper to his neighbour, 'that was my meaning.' As for the explanations of the existing race of dictionaries, they are mere evasions of the question. \* \* \*

"Like light and life, thou art everywhere; or, at the least, wherever civilization is, there art thou to be found, despotically ruling the minds of men of every grade and station, from the doctor to the dustman—from the lawyer to the labourer. \* \* \* Thou hast more distant relations than a Scotchman likely to do well in the world, even though his name be Campbell. And it is curious to mark the different ways in which thy multitudinous kith and kin infer a connexion. Some are respectable by descent, some by dress, some by the situation of the dwellings in which they have temporarily located themselves. A man in very low circumstances, if he has no better claim, is consanguineous on the strength of a hat with a brim, or a stocking without a hole—'two precious items in a poor man's eye'; the spruce mechanic's dapper coat, or his wife's silk gown, leave no doubt, in his own eyes at least, how closely he is allied; the small tradesman's snug house, tiny flower-spot before the door, and neat green railings, distinctly mark him for thine own. \* \* \*

"Some men neglect their personal appearance, and concentrate their claims to respectability in a brass knocker, a plate with their name engraved thereon, venetian blinds, or any other pretty additament to their domiciles; others are respectable by virtue of their connexions; others by going to the private boxes at the theatre; others by a pew next the parson at church; others by the people they visit; others by having every thing in season. Yet, difficult as it is for the mind of man to comprehend all these things, and to decide properly and justly, the women, taking advantage of their superior powers of penetration, and delicacy of discrimination, divide and subdivide respectability as easily as quicksilver. They have their 'respectable sort of people—very respectable—highly respectable—extremely respectable—most respectable,' which makes the thing about as difficult to understand or explain, as political economy or electro-magnetism.

"About the boldest and most decided opinion concerning this particle of the English language that I am acquainted with, was that given by a witness in a swindling transaction, who, on being asked by the judge his reason for affirming that the defendant was a respectable man, replied, 'that he kept a gig.'"

The Temperance Societies have, as we all know, been a good deal patronized in America—the enthusiasm of the young ladies in their favour led them, it appears, to enter into associations, pledged to discourage the

addresses of all men known to have used spirituous liquors. The writer, among other consequences, notices the possible influence of such associations on literature, and gives the following as a probable scene from some future novelist:—

"Henry unexpectedly entered the room, and to his utter surprise and dismay found Laura literally steeped in tears. \* \* \*

"Henry approached, and by a regular series of tender solicitations and delicate assiduities, sought to win from her the cause of her distress. \* \* \* At length her grief found vent in an audible torrent of exclamations and interrogatories—

"'And can you, Henry—you who are the sole author of my misery, pretend ignorance?—you, who have blighted all my young hopes of happiness;—you, who have betrayed my trusting affection—you who have—'

"'Me!' exclaimed the now really alarmed youth, 'what have I done?'

"'And do you ask?—you who have created an insuperable barrier to our union,—you who have placed a chasm between us that can never be overleapt—a bar that can never be taken down—a—'

"'Good heavens! what have I done?'

"'You have,' sobbed the agitated girl, almost choked with contending emotions, 'you have drunk a gin-sling!'

"'I know it; and what of that?'

"'Unthinking, cruel man! by so doing you have wrecked my peace of mind for ever. Did I not tell you—answer me—Saturday fortnight,—that I had become a member of the Auxiliary Branch Anti-marrying-young-men-who-drink-ardent-spirits Society—that I have vowed, &c. 'Then what a climax will the reconciliation scene be—'

"'And you solemnly promise that you will never hereafter drink a mint julep?'

"'Never!'

"'Or brandy-punch?'

"'Never!'

"'Or whiskey-toddy?'

"'Never, never!'

"'Or a gin-sling?'

"'Oh! never!'

"'I am satisfied! We may yet be happy!'"

With one other extract we shall conclude. It is a sort of speculation on the future—presumed extracts from a newspaper of 1933:—

"Another shocking catastrophe.—As the warranted-safe locomotive smoke-consuming, fuel-providing steam-carriage Lightning, was this morning proceeding at its usual three-quarter speed of one hundred and twenty-seven miles an hour, at the junction of the Hannington and Slipsby rail-roads, it unfortunately came in contact with the steam-carriage Snail, going about one hundred and five miles per hour. Of course both vehicles with their passengers were instantaneously reduced to an impalpable powder. The friends of the deceased have the consolation of knowing that no blame can possibly attach to the intelligent proprietors of the Lightning, it having been clearly ascertained that those of the Snail started their carriage full two seconds before the time agreed on, in order to obviate in some degree, the delay to which passengers were unavoidably subjected by the clumsy construction of their vehicle."

"Melancholy accident.—As a beautiful and accomplished young lady of the name of Jimps, a passenger in the Swift-as-thought-locomotive, was endeavouring to catch a flying glimpse of the new Steam University, her breathing apparatus unfortunately slipped from her mouth, and she was a corpse in three quarters of a second. A young gentleman, who had been tenderly attached to her for several days, in the agony of

his feeling help; he much pra passenger mind, pr to their scene, &c.

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his feelings withdrew his air tube and called for help; he of course shared a similar fate. Too much praise cannot be given to the rest of the passengers, who, with inimitable presence of mind, prudently held their breathing-bladders to their mouths during the whole of this trying scene, &c."

The volumes contain better papers than any we have quoted from—but our extracts have been, we hope, pleasant specimens, and they best suited our limits.

*Forty Years' Residence in America; or, the Doctrine of a Particular Providence exemplified in the Life of Grant Thornburn, (the original Lawrie Todd,) Seedsman, New York. Written by Himself; with an Introduction by John Galt, Esq. London: Fraser.*

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES are generally very agreeable fictions; the amiable authors have all their own way; they augment the difficulties they have surmounted—place all they do in a fair and pleasant light—look very kindly on their own weaknesses, and, glancing at their shadows in the five o'clock sun, imagine themselves of colossal attitude, and make a sketch in pen and ink to suit. Had the Strap of Smollett written his autobiography, he would have quenched the rebellion of 1745, by the way in which he shaved the Pretender; and were the Andrew Fairservice of Scott to put pen to paper, unquestionably he would impute to his own wisdom the brightened fortunes of the house of Osbaldistone. It is this splendid egotism which makes us love such works: a man, whose name is familiar to fame, can tell us little that we do not know; but the man who was never before heard of, has the world at his mercy, and may tell what tale he pleases. We like autobiographies; it gladdens our hearts to see one of your cold, calculating, seven-per-cent. sort of persons, step from behind his counter, to commit himself with pen and ink; we put on a face of grave wonder as he unfolds the story of his fortunes: how he began business on a tenpenny nail, or three eggs; how sixpence produced a shilling, and a shilling begat a pound—and, in short, how successfully he crawled upward, by petty bargainings and niggardly economy, to a proud eminence, on which he prospers, like a striped pumpkin on a heap of dung, to the astonishment of all the world.

The author of the work before us has not sinned exactly in this way; he is not a very vain man; such a thing as writing his own life never crossed his fancy, nor was he at all aware of his being a fit subject for such speculations, till he heard that Galt had realized a fortune, by exhibiting him in England under the name of Lawrie Todd. The scales fell from his eyes; a new source of profit presented itself to his fancy; and he concluded, wisely, we think, that since the world had paid a thousand pounds for a fictitious portrait, they would give thrice as much for the real and true original. Away he came to England, made his feelings known in a quarter where they were not likely to be discouraged, got acquainted with one or two well qualified for helping a lame dog over a stile; and the result is, a new and true history of 'Grant Thornburn the Great,' which, it is to be hoped, will increase the writer's store, and drive the impostor Lawrie out of the market.

Amid many matters of trifling moment, there are passages of great truth and force, in this little work. The hero of the tale is a wandering Scotsman: he finds himself, after some few tossings about, at New York; his staid conduct and religious disposition make an impression on a young woman, and he resolves to seek her for a wife:—

"As I felt a deep interest on the occasion, considering myself an instrument in the hands of God in bringing it about, I took my seat in church, where I might get a correct view of what passed—when I saw her tall, slender, erect frame, with slow and measured step, move up the middle aisle, dressed in a white muslin robe, plain made, but neat and clean. When I saw her stand composed in the face of a vast congregation, and give the regular and distinct tokens of assent to the vows of God laid upon her by Dr. Mason in a most solemn and affecting tone of voice, while the congregation seemed hushed in the stillness of death—when I saw her untie the black ribbon under her chin, that held on her hat, while the minister was descending from the pulpit to administer the ordinance—when I saw her hands hanging straight by her sides, one holding her black beaver hat, and the other a white handkerchief—when I saw her turn up her face to heaven, and shut her eyes, as the minister was going to pour the consecrated sign—when I saw her wipe the pearly drops, I thought her face shone like the face of an angel; and I swore in my heart that, by the help of the Lord, nothing on earth but death should part us. When we returned home, she laid aside her hat, and stood before the glass adjusting her hair. I stood at a short distance behind her, looking over her shoulder; observing my eyes fixed on her face, she turned round and remarked, she might thank me, as the instrument under God, for what had come to pass this night. I replied, God can take a feeble worm in his hand, and with it thresh the mountains, and make them fine as chaff. I then told her when and where I first saw her, and the providential manner in which God had brought us acquainted, and added, if it was His will, I hoped nothing but death should part us; and repeating the words of Ruth to Naomi, I said, 'Entreat me not to leave thee; where thou goest I will go, where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.' Here was my declaration; but the battle was yet to be fought; she looked with pity and concern in my face, and turned away with a sigh. Before I could ask the meaning of that sigh, the door opened, her mother and my brother entered. When, next evening, I learned the cause of this sigh, it awakened all my fears—it was occasioned, she said, by the pain it would give me, when she was obliged to let me know that she had been addressed by a young man for nearly two years, and was *all but* engaged. As I had seen this young man only two or three times in the house, I had no thoughts of his being a rival. I found he was a man of property, owned two houses, viz. the house on the south corner of Liberty Street and Broadway, and the house adjoining the corner, both fronting on Broadway; one himself occupied as a jewellery store, which was well stocked with goods. At this time he was computed to be worth 50,000 dollars. Says I, 'Rebecca, and why don't you marry him?' Says she, 'I can't tell; I can't make up my mind.' What a temptation for a poor girl and her mother, whose property, perhaps, would not amount to 100 dollars! and how hopeless for me to contend with such a man! I, a poor stranger and a nailer, who, with hard working, could scarcely earn 75 cents a day! He came in the name of his god (the world) making offers of settlement on her and her relations; my trust was in the name of Him who has all hearts in his hands,

and can turn them as easy as he turns the gentle flowing stream. The fifth and six verses of the third chapter of Proverbs was now my counsellor."

We have heard of a devout shopkeeper, who advertised for a porter who feared the Lord and could carry twenty stone: our friend Thornburn was the man he sought—his suit prospered through grace, though his rival was strong in cash—he deserved his fortune.

We have read many accounts of the Yellow Fever, but we have read nothing superior to the simple reality of the following:—

"The first alarm of the yellow fever was given on the 26th of July, 1798. By the 15th of August, fourteen cases were reported to have terminated fatally. By the 25th, the excitement was terrible; the city was all commotion. Every vehicle, from the humble dungcart to the gilded carriage, was now in requisition, removing families, furniture, and goods—the old man of eighty, with the stripling of one year, the lame, the halt, and the blind, all crowding the boats, the lanes, and outlets from the city, fear quickening their pace, and the destroying angel at their heels. Hundreds of them died in the towns and villages around; but not one instance occurred of any inhabitant of Albany, Bergen, or Brooklyn, ever being seized by this, as it was called, infectious disease. About this time, many instances like the following came under my notice:—A respectable shoemaker, living at the corner of Pine and Front Streets, removed with his wife and younger children. His son, about twenty-one, and a confidential townsman of mine, and an old coloured woman, requested permission to stay, as they said they were not afraid of the fever. In a few days all three were taken sick. The journeyman was my townsman—I was intimate in the families. I procured a doctor and nurse, and gave what attention I could. On the fifth day the son died; early next morning I found the house locked up and the key gone. I made an entry through a lower window—the nurse had fled, and took some of the small moveables by way of compensation. The black woman had rolled from her bed in the agonies of death, and was lying on the floor: being unable to lift her, I put a pillow under her head, covered her body with a sheet, and entered the next room, where my friend lay, his eyes closing fast in the sleep of death. In two hours the woman died: I procured a hearse, and watched by my friend till eight p. m., when he also died. At the same time, a young man of my acquaintance lay at No. —, Liberty Street, in the same situation; I nursed him—he recovered. Corner of Dover and Water Streets lay three brothers—I procured a doctor—a nurse I could not find. When the doctor entered, and saw one laid on a mattress on the floor, one on a cot, in the same room, and one on a bed in another room, he seemed struck with fear. He asked if there was any fire in the house? I procured some. He lit a cigar, and smoked most profusely. He proposed bleeding; I took the basin, but for some minutes his hand trembled so, that he could not strike the vein. When finished, I went with him to the door. Says he, 'You run a great risk.' Says I, 'There is no retreating.' This was on Monday the 17th Sept. He called next day—Wednesday and Thursday he did not appear. I called at his house on Friday about ten o'clock A. M., and was informed, that his corpse was now on the road to Potter's Field. Next morning, the 22d September, the elder brother died, aged twenty-two; the younger ones recovered. The doctor's name was Brooks, and kept his office in Cherry Street. Returning at eleven o'clock P. M. from visiting my patients, the night was dark; a



thick wetting mist was falling; the lamps twinkled just enough to shew darkness visible. Descending the hill, from the corner of Dover Street, in Pearl, I met two hearses with the dead, one was issuing out of Peck Slip, the other coming out from Ferry Street. They turned up Pearl, towards Chatham Street, on their way to Potter's Field. Each hearse had a driver and an assistant, with a lantern between their feet sitting in front. Being heavily laden, they drove slowly up the hill; the wheels and springs creaked and groaned under the weight of dead mortality. The drivers sat dumb as mutes; the pale light of their lanterns flickering across their stupid, unmeaning countenances, theirs looked as white as did the face of Samuel, just peering out of the grave, when called by the Witch of Endor from the mansions of the dead. I thought, what a fine subject this for such a pencil as West's, to make a second edition of *Death on the Pale Horse*!

"*Sabbath, 15th September.*—All the churches down town known by the name of *orthodox* and *reformed* being shut up, the poor who could not fly were very glad to pick what little crumbs of gospel comfort they could find in the good old church of the Trinity, which was open every Sabbath. As the bell was tolling for afternoon service, Mr. Johnson and his wife, and myself and wife (we had all been married within the year,) were walking among the tombs; as we turned the east corner (right under what now is Bliss, the bookseller's window,) Mrs. J., who was a lively girl, turned her husband round, and exclaimed, in a sort of playful manner, 'J., if I die of the fever, you must bury me there,' pointing to the spot. Next day she was reported; and on Friday, the 21st, we buried her there!—and there you may see her grave-stone until this day. I was told the other day, that it is contemplation to run Pine Street through the churchyard to Greenwich Street; if so, the grave, the story, and the stone, will be lost, as Harper says, in eternal oblivion; except some good-natured printer gives it a place in his *Spectator*, where it may remain on his dusty shelves as long as *moths* grow and *worms* run. Very many fell a sacrifice to the fever for want of proper attendance about this time, especially among those who were left in charge of their masters' houses. Relations, and sometimes acquaintances, would attend one another; but many died unknown and unlamented. At the corner of — Street and Broadway, a respectable family removed, leaving a man-servant in charge of the house. After some days, it was noticed that he did not appear in the street as usual,—it was supposed that he had shut up the house and fled: in a day or two after, a person who had charge of a house whose windows looked into the yard of said house, observed a man sitting in a sort of arbour, or summer-house. He, supposing the man had returned, took no more notice till next day, when, seeing him still sitting for hours in the same position, he gave the alarm: the door was forced, and the man found dead—*partly undressed*. In this and subsequent fevers, cats and in some cases dogs were thoughtlessly left shut up, to die a cruel death; the streets, also, were swarming with famishing animals, whose piteous howlings added much to the distress of the few inhabitants who were unable to leave the city. In these times, that tried the souls as well as the bodies of men, I saw parents fly from their sick children, and children from their parents, husbands from their wives; but never, except in one solitary instance, did I see a woman desert her husband in distress. She, to be sure, was married to a great lump of a fellow old enough to be her father—rather a sloven, and apparently a proper subject for the yellow fever. As soon as he was fairly reported, she snatched up her youngest child, got on board a potato-sloop at Peck Slip, and never stopped till she got out at

Stonington light-house, or somewhere down east; for in a few days thereafter I received a letter from her, wishing to be informed if her husband was dead. From the tenor of her letter, I expect she was woefully disappointed when she received my answer; for he lived to lay her head very quietly in the grave about three years after. She was a real Yankee, but I did not think she was a daughter of the *Puritans*. I rather supposed she must have sprung from those *lang-sided*, corn-fed wenchers and whale-killing sailors, who peopled all that country round Cape Cod; whereof you may see a more particular account in Knickerbocker's history of those times."

We must now bid our agreeable gossipper farewell.

#### OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

'*Moments of Idleness; or, a Peep into the World we call "ours."*'—This little volume contains six hundred and odd maxims and observations on man and his ways. Some of them are the common stock property of mankind; others are trivial or unnecessary; a few, however, carry the weight of original observation, and are entitled to attention. Many of the author's positions we felt much inclined to question while we read them, and, indeed, no one can well peruse the book without a desire to enter into controversy; but the bane and antidote are both there. By the side of a remark which we dislike, stands a maxim which we love—and so we part with the writer in peace.

'*Benson Poulett, 2 vols.*'—The scene of this novel is laid in Moscow and its neighbourhood, during the time of Bonaparte's invasion. The tale is not without interest, and would have been better had it proceeded more naturally, with fewer extraordinary escapes and fortuitous arrivals.

'*Northero's Parliamentary Chronicle.*'—We can only say of this work, that it professes to contain a full and accurate Report of the Debates in both Houses during the first Session of the Reformed Parliament, and that it is the most ponderous octavo we ever handled, containing no less than 1670 large octavo pages!

'*The Medical Works of Paulus Ægineta, Translated into English, with a Copious Commentary, by Francis Adams, Esq., Surgeon, Vol. I.*'—Mr. Adams seems to possess no small skill in compilation, together with a most unwearied assiduity in hunting through the dusty tomes of ancient commentators—"servile pecus"—and transferring their matter to his own pages. We regret his industry has not been better employed. The works of Paulus Ægineta can be of no use to any one, save the accomplished physician, and he must be supposed able to peruse them in the original. Even to him, the knowledge of them is rather an ornament than of any direct utility; and putting them into the hands of a medical student, would be perfectly ridiculous,—it would be sending him to school in the dark ages, and cramming his head with absurdities, all which he would have to unlearn, before he could venture to practise, without the fear of well-merited ridicule, or a coroner's inquest continually before his eyes. Mr. Adams has read the ancients until he has come to look on them as all but perfect;

*Sic fautor veterum, ut tabulas pecore vetantis,  
Pontificum libros, anossa volumina vatum,  
Dicitur Albano, musas in monte locutas.*

"It appears to me," says he, "that at certain periods of ancient times, the standard of professional excellence was such as would not easily be attained at the present day, with all our vaunted improvements in education; and that many of these early masters of our art were distinguished for varied stores of erudition,

an ardent love of truth, and an aptitude to detect the fallacies of error, such as few of us even now can lay claim to." Neither is the character undeserved, nor unfairly drawn. Beyond all doubt, they possessed great learning, but the world has long since decided that all learning is not knowledge. The standard of professional excellence, too, is now rather settled by an appeal to the efficiency of the remedies employed; nor do we think much credit would attach to half-a-dozen physicians of the present day, who could hit on no better mode of treating inflammation of the brain, than applying a wet sop to the middle of the head, which yet seems the only therapeutic agent suggested by the joint wisdom of Oribasius, Actius, Avicenna, Haly Abbas, Alsaharavius, Rhases, Alexander Aphrodisius, and Paulus Ægineta, as may be seen by referring to his section on Siriasis, (Book I. § 13.), and the learned comments of Mr. Adams thereupon.—We would not, however, be understood to condemn the book as altogether useless. It certainly contains much literary trifling and grave commonplace: it informs young ladies, that "paleness of the complexion is diminished by a merry course of life, and by mixing together radishes, leeks, and the green chick-pea;" it advises, that "after six years of age, both boys and girls should be consigned to writing-masters of a mild and benevolent disposition;" it informs travellers, that "a staff will be useful on a journey; for in going down a declivity, by putting it before, it will support the body like a pole, and by leaning upon it in ascending, it will assist in raising the body;" it divides Friction into nine kinds—three of quality, hard, soft, and moderate, and three of quantity, much, little, and moderate, "so that if the three different kinds of friction as to quantity, be multiplied into the same number as to quality, they will produce nine combinations;" it recommends people to "vociferate" an hour a day, which will "promote health, by attenuating excrementitious matters;" it tells us, that a buck goat is bad eating, directs the best method of thawing "congealed persons," and gives a recipe for "suffocating an egg," which last achievement is performed with the assistance of "sauc, wine, and oil;"—yet, with all this, there are often the outbreaks of a manly and vigorous mind, a keen spirit of patient observation and accurate induction, while the notes contain many curious particulars respecting the medical systems and practice of the Greeks and Romans, together with carefully collected descriptions of their meals, and observations on their baths, wines, &c., which, doubtless, will have considerable interest for the medical antiquary. Still, we regret that Mr. Adams's labour was not directed towards some more profitable object;—we fear, the present will scarcely repay his exertions.

'*The small Edition of English Botany,*' by Mr. Sowerby of which we have more than once spoken in terms of praise, continues to go on steadily and well. When complete, it will be the cheapest work of its kind that has ever appeared in this country.

'*Baxter's British Flowering Plants,*' also continue to deserve our commendation. We are glad to see that the early numbers have reached a second edition.

'*The Horticultural Journal and Florist's Register,*' in monthly numbers.—Trash!

'*Maud's Botanic Garden*' is said to be a favourite with young ladies; we presume it is for their sakes that a "bordered edition," has appeared with every plate set in a smart frame. Mr. Maud, if he makes no pretence to science, should at least attend a little to accuracy. Who told him that *Wistaria frutescens* had ever been

## BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL HISTORY OF THE LITERATURE OF THE LAST FIFTY YEARS.

BY ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

HISTORY—Continued from No. 318, p. 815.

considered a green-house Plant? As to being "a beautiful climber," that is a matter of taste; most people think it an ugly one.

'*The Daughter's Own Book*.'—It seems to be an all but general opinion, that the follies of men and the indiscretions of women arise solely from want of good advice: some such notion too was common to our ancestors, and the "good counsel" and other wise characters, in the old Mysteries and Moralities, were but the forerunners of our monitors and monitresses of the present generation. But, somehow or other, much of this advice has been thrown away: it was not in the times of the kings of Judah alone, that "wisdom called aloud in the streets, and no one regarded her voice." Nay, such is the perversity of human nature, that we are afraid many youths of either sex, who, if left more to themselves, would have kept the high way of wisdom, have been actually goaded into foolery by the persecution of aunts and grandmothers, not to speak of whole libraries of printed impertinence, under the title of good advice. '*The Daughter's Own Book*' has sundry chapters which we might commend, particularly that on conversation; but we have little reliance on the judgment of any one who, even in true moral reading, would prefer Montgomery and Hannah More to Shakespeare and Scott.

'*The Naturalist's Poetical Companion*.'—This is a pretty book and well imagined. It shows extensive reading and good taste. All the best things, which our bards have said of birds and flowers, are here gathered into a garland and illustrated by useful notes; nor are herbs and trees forgotten.

'*A Theoretical and Practical Grammar of the Spanish Language*, by Emanuel del Mar.'—Amongst the living languages of Europe, the Spanish is, perhaps, one of the least difficult to be learned by Englishmen; not only from the extraordinary facility with which the pronunciation is acquired, but because the rules of its syntax are, with few exceptions, fixed and simple; yet, till the publication of M'Henry's Grammar, there was not one which contained the whole of those rules, or in which the learner could find complete directions for acquiring that beautiful language with ease and facility. M'Henry's Grammar was certainly a great improvement upon all that preceded it; and we can only say of the present, that it is at least equal to it, and on some points the directions are more clear and simple.

'*A Grammar of the Spanish Language*, by J. de Alcalá.'—Another Spanish Grammar! Mr. Alcalá has tried to improve his work by giving explanations and reasons, by pointing out the differences between the parts of speech in the Spanish and English, by an article on the construction of the Spanish language, and by explanation of the syntax of the parts of speech after their analysis. These additions may be useful, but we have objections. By multiplying rules and explanations, a work may become a good aid to persons desirous of becoming Spanish scholars, but comparatively useless to such as have to acquire the rudiments of the language. We do not approve of the brevity of the very incomplete Grammar of Fernandez, but there is a middle course between saying nothing, or next to nothing, and saying everything. We are, indeed, of opinion that an elementary Grammar ought to contain only the general rules, and that the niceties and idioms of a language should not be noticed, or only in notes, to which the scholar may, or may not, refer at his pleasure.—Before we take leave of Mr. Alcalá, we will advise him, should his Grammar arrive at a second edition, to correct some of his Spanish phrases, many of those, for instance, page 51, which, though not positively ungrammatical, are obsolete.

Of the historical powers of WILLIAM ROSCOE, critics have spoken sternly as well as kindly. Among the former, was Gifford. "The History of Lorenzo de' Medici," he says, "was overrated at its first appearance, but well merits a place in our libraries. What with its classic appearance and valuable information, its English and Italian, its verse and prose, its uniform composure and not rare affectation, its frontispieces and vignettes, its splendour of type and expanse of margin, it may, perhaps, be characterized, as exhibiting somewhat like that union of neatness, pretension, and cheerlessness, which belongs to the modern idea of a cold collation. The second great attempt of our author on Italian history, proved, by no means equally successful. Its faults were greater, its virtues less; and by a singular infelicity, though it discovered few tokens of spirit or genius, it could still less lay claim to the praise of correct composition. The historian also, somewhat unnecessarily, and beyond doubt somewhat inauspiciously, embroiled himself, to a certain extent at least, with the Reformation—a circumstance, however, for which the subsequent discovery of his political tenets may possibly enable us to account; for the reformers of the sixteenth century are in no great favour, we suspect, with those of the eighteenth and nineteenth. Yet the positive delinquencies which deformed the '*History of Leo the Tenth*,' were protected from observation by the negative fault of dullness. It was screened by clouds of its own raising; and the literary character of Mr. Roscoe still continues to be estimated by his first best performance." The party spirit which speaks in this extract was counteracted by the praise of the party to which the historian belonged: he that was trodden into dust by a Tory, as a dull writer, was raised and crowned one of the princes of literature by a Whig: truth was not the object of either. The *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh Reviews* exhibited, on paper, the strife which disgraced the Whigs and Tories in parliament: literature and the dignity of the country suffered by the indecent contest.

The merits of Roscoe, as a historian, must be sought for in his works, and neither in the sayings of his friends nor of his enemies. He was one of the first who made us intimately acquainted with the later princes and taste and talent of Italy: before this, we looked upon Rome, and all who sat in the papal chair, with distrust, if not with fear; and we could scarcely persuade ourselves that the Priest-king of the Vatican might be a person of lofty feelings and fine taste, and who loved mankind. It is true, that, to accomplished scholars and travelled men, Roscoe had not much to tell that was new; but he collected the scattered intelligence with a diligent hand, and wrought it into the historical form in a very graceful and pleasing manner. The image which he gives us of the papal power during the brilliant days of the Medici, is a very characteristic one,—and one, too, that will be long liked, though it is neither very vigorous, nor of the epic order. His principal fault is want of original force of thought; he never surprises us with ideas either high or profound; his eye sees but a little way and loves the ground; he is ever equal, ever tranquil, and neither rises nor falls. He discusses the merits of a medal in the same quiet, gentle way that he discourses of the awakening energies of the Reformation. The coming light of that great change is looked on with tranquillity, though it threw its rays into the dungeons of St. Angelo, and deprived Leo of some of his fairest kingdoms. Nor is the language in which all this is expressed of a very

original kind: it is harmonious and elegant, and seldom obscure; but it wants the fine free English tone—the natural ease and happy carelessness of one more solicitous about his sentiments than his words. It shows much taste, and but little nature—some classic refinement, with a good deal of labour. In short, his style is more remarkable for neatness than force—for being "Florentine and slender," rather than weighty and colossal.

The influence which Roscoe exercised was not confined to Liverpool. His name was carried over the world on the wings of history and philanthropy; the historian of Leo the Tenth was eloquent and zealous in the removal of that dark spot, the Slave Trade, from the otherwise white robe of Britain. He also sympathized deeply in the fortunes of the family of Burns, and upbraided Scotland, in a poem of considerable power, for her unkind conduct to her most gifted son;—nay, so far did he carry this feeling, that he contemplated a new Memoir of the poet, in which the ungenerous and ungente behaviour of the northern nobles was to be emblazoned in the language of indignant anger. He wrote a small portion of the Memoir, and, probably not much liking what he had done, abandoned the subject for ever. I have seen the little that he did, and cannot commend it. The style was laboured and ornate. The poetical talents of Roscoe have been praised by no mean judges. His verses are very fair specimens of that kind of poetry, the excellence of which consists less in strength of wing, than in beauty of plume and lightness of movement. His song is flowing and harmonious rather than energetic. He was one of the kindest and most generous of mankind: his house and his purse were opened to all the children of genius; nor were they shut so long as fortune left the owner aught to bestow. He was of humble origin, and self-educated: nor were his studies confined to literature alone; he was an excellent judge of painting; the friend, and for some time the patron, of Fuseli: in medals, likewise, he was a connoisseur, and extended his studies to all that was polite and elegant.

The life of SIR JOHN MALCOLM is as interesting as his histories; and they are learned, dramatic, and eloquent. He went out when a boy to India, and soon became remarkable for his acquirements in native lore, and in the business of war and government: he rose in rank by seniority; but he was widely known, when only in the rank of lieutenant, for knowledge of all kinds, a ready and an agreeable way of communicating it, as well as for presence of mind and daring courage. He was ever ready either to study or to strike. Talents such as these soon carry the owner to distinction in India: he was widely employed in war and in negotiation, and acquitted himself in both in a manner that won on enemies as well as friends. During his marches and embassies he acquired such intimate knowledge of the manners, feelings, and character of the people of Hindostan and Persia, that he was enabled to write those histories which will make him known to posterity. For success as a historian, he was much indebted to that spirit of observation and remark which accompanied him from his youth up. He was no sooner in India than he was struck with the traditions and customs of the natives, and reading in these the history of the people, he set about collecting them with unremitting assiduity. His practice was to carry a note-book with him, and pencil down the name of the person who

related the story, the place where, and the time when, he heard it; and in this way he amassed sixty or seventy volumes of individual or national anecdote.

In his 'History of Persia' he made a sensible use of materials of that nature: he thus pleads for the traditional marvels of his introductory chapters: "If we desire to be fully informed of a nation's history, we must not reject the fables under which the few traces that remain of its origin are concealed. These, however extravagant, always merit attention. They have an influence on the character of the people to whom they relate. They mix with their habits, their literature, and sometimes with their religion. They become, in short, national legends, which it is sacrilege to doubt; and to question them would raise in the breast of a Persian all those feelings which would be excited in that of an Englishman, if he heard a foreigner detract from the great name of Alfred. Such heroes often rise in importance—as far as their example is of value—in proportion as their real history is lost in obscurity; they are adopted as models by the painters and poets of their country; every human virtue is ascribed to them; and men are taught their duty from fables decorated with names, which they have learned to venerate from their cradle, and the love of which is cherished with all the enthusiasm of national pride." The accuracy of these remarks must be evident to all who are acquainted with history; they apply to all nations; and the legends of Arthur and his knights in the south, and of Wallace and his companions in the north, cannot but recur to British readers.

This has given an original air and a chivalrous spirit to the works of Malcolm, which render them so acceptable to all who desire to become acquainted with the fortunes of Persia or of Hindostan. He wrote many of his descriptions in the vales, or on the hills, where the battles were fought or negotiations concluded; and he visited in person all the remarkable places in Hindostan, of which his 'History of Central India' required him to speak. Of the social natures and domestic habits of the people he speaks from observation. He relates many anecdotes of their warriors; quotes many verses of their poets; and he is pleased when he can give a pithy saying from the lips of their native princes. It is this which renders those histories among the most readable books of the language. Nor has he neglected the doctrines and ceremonies of religion; the mystic and poetic absurdities of the sect of Saafis—in short, all that he considered characteristic or national he has exhibited in his pages. In his 'Persian Sketches' he has admitted much which he could not admit into his graver history—these consist chiefly of legends, ceremonies, and scenes: they are all stamped with the impress of the East, and are worth ten thousand of those stories which it was once the practice to manufacture for home consumption, under the name of Eastern Tales. 'The Political History' is less addressed to the general reader, and may be described as learned and liberal: it has been often referred to by men well acquainted with Eastern affairs.

The works of Sir John Malcolm are less the offspring of study than of observation: he had seen much, and he has told much. He had a quick eye and a ready understanding, a picturesque skill, and a spirit equally dramatic as historic. His language hovers between the elaborate and the natural, not wholly of the one nor of the other, and yet partaking of the character of both. His reasoning is generally correct, and his thoughts, though not profound, spring naturally out of the narrative, and are not stuck upon it for display. He has much of the sensibility as well as fancy of a poet, and some of the scenes in his history of both Persia and India, are almost fit for representation. In conversation,

he abounded in anecdote; his happy gaiety of nature and kindness of heart, made his company always acceptable: he could pass readily from the comic to the sad, and from the sad to the comic, and pause in the midst of hearty laughter, and give advice equally wholesome and serious.

A History of the Six Years War, in which the cause of Europe was contested in the Spanish Peninsula, has been written, as I have related, by Southey, with so much care, truth, and talent, that nothing seemed left for a new adventurer, but to glean where the other had reaped, and tell the individual fortunes of peasant warriors, whose deeds had been overlooked. A history by a skilful soldier, who was intimate with the manœuvres and combinations of modern war; who had been present in the principal battles; was well acquainted with the far extended scene of strife, and who had associated with the leaders on both sides, was not expected or hoped for, when such appeared from the pen of COLONEL NAPIER. Failure, instead of brilliant success, was presumed by many when the work was announced: the hard, rude outlines of the contest were alone expected from the pen of a soldier, with endless marches and counter-marches, and a full return of killed and wounded—with all the powder which had been burnt, and all the balls fired in the trench or in the field. Instead of this, one of the most remarkable books of modern times was the result. The style is concise, clear, and energetic; the narrative vehement and rapid; the looks and motions, and discipline of the contending armies, are given as distinct as in a picture: the generals and leaders are exhibited as in life—here slow and undecided—there prompt and fiery, and all the varied fortunes of the fight from the moment the squadrons are precipitated into battle, till the victory is decided, are delineated with a burning energy, unknown to the calmer pages of ordinary historians. The historic picture which he exhibits, seems deficient in nothing; there are stern, but there are also tender parts; he is a Briton, and a true one, but he is not unjust to the valour or the military skill of his antagonists; nor is his eye confined to the details of campaigns, and the vicissitudes of battle; he describes the social condition of the people, and paints their feelings and their manners, in a lively and forcible way.

The man and the soldier are stamped on every page; while it is quite certain that no one but a clear-sighted soldier could have penned such a work, it is equally sure that his heart is warm, and his sympathies alive. He does not look upon war as a wondrous development of science alone, in which the blood of thousands is spilled, to vindicate a mathematical manœuvre or support a scientific demonstration; men, he regards as something better than food for the cannon; and the earth is to him lovely, for its produce, and its woods and streams, rather than for affording capital soil for entrenchments, and fine plains for evolutions of cavalry. In the same train of feeling, he surveys the variety of skill which the war brought into action, and, like a true son of genius, decides in favour of the service which gives free room for talents to rise, and in which the chief leaders have been called from all degrees and ranks of life. In this decision, he recognizes the great principle of nature, and condemns those distinctions which have grown up in the earth, usurping the high places on which nature intended that talent should stand. This boldness has given offence to many; for, no doubt, it strikes at the root of aristocratic influence, and proclaims the unwelcome truth, that God bestows genius without regard to the blind and artificial distinctions invented by man. It was impossible, however, if he reasoned at all, to come to any other conclusion:

the Napoleon or the Soult—or, to speak more correctly, the Bernadotte or the Lasnes of a British regiment, would have risen by bravery and good conduct to the rank of sergeant, and stood there with the halbert in their hands, looking at the high-born and the wealthy climbing—nay, rising on wings into command, who had not a tithe of their talents. All this could not be otherwise than disagreeable to a man who seeks distinction from genius alone, and who feels, that under the shade of the old aristocracy, Napoleon could never have risen higher than a Colonel of Artillery.

He has likewise, it seems, given offence to the people of Spain. This could not well be otherwise: he speaks too frankly and boldly, not to give pain to many. It is not a pleasant thing for a Spaniard to be told, that, unable to fight the battle of his own independence, he was obliged to seek others to fight it for him; and to a bigoted Catholic, deliverance by the sword of a heretic, could not be acceptable, word the deed as gently as the historian might. Nor was it much to the delight of the warriors of Britain, when, after repulsing the French from the Peninsula, they embarked for their native land, to hear wafted by the winds which filled their sails, the voice of general thanksgiving for the blessed departure of the heretics. In fact, the task which the historian imposed on himself, was the vindication of his fellow soldiers from the aspersions of Spanish writers, "who have," he says, "boldly asserted, and the world has believed, that the deliverance of the Peninsula was the work of their hands. From the moment that an English force took the field, the Spaniards ceased to act as principals, in a contest carried on in the heart of their country, and involving their existence as an independent nation: they were self-sufficient, and their pride was wounded by insult; they were superstitious, and their religious feelings were roused to fury by an all-powerful clergy, who feared to lose their rich endowments." In short, they cannot be said to have entered heartily into the scheme of their own deliverance; they hated both the French and the English—they destroyed the former whenever they could do so safely; and they injured for a long while the latter, by the promises of supplies and co-operation, which were not forthcoming in the hour of trial. The soldiers of England brought home a hearty hatred of the Spaniards, from the war of the Peninsula, and Napier writes strongly from strong impressions. He has, perhaps, expressed this a little too impetuously: but he has everywhere spoken like a free and honest soldier, and produced a work which for vivid beauty of narrative may vie, I have heard good judges say, with Caesar or Tacitus.

The 'State of Europe during the Middle Ages,' and 'The Constitutional History of England,' are works by which the name of HENRY HALLAM will be known to posterity. Of the former, it has been said, that the plan is more extensive than that laid down by Dr. Robertson, its arrangement more strictly historical, its views more comprehensive, and its information more copious and critical; and of the latter, it is remarked, that no work of these our latter days can equal it for strict impartiality; that it is eminently judicial; that its whole spirit is of the bench, not of the bar; and that he states the case with candour, and, in summing up, looks neither to the right nor to the left—glossing over nothing, nor exaggerating nothing. This is high praise. That he has executed his designs with learning and ability, seems admitted by all who are masters of the matter of which he treats; and though his style is charged with being occasionally harsh or obscure, it is felt to be massive and vigorous, and not without a certain grave and impressive eloquence; while a spirit of freedom and liberality is breathed over the whole performance.

The 'Ages,' is to be in condition of Rome, those of defence peaceable, himself dertook land's se the ing author and be martial story, s like w neglect establis woven whole The da the lig supern he retu denec on the spired his ch and de the fic consti and p bers. tory of the ey histori sition, contri not th dertal better

In I know great are o most autho works on the and have best rich an ar rious of a on the worl or th think rians and D's men First some worl task has coul our than tho pur have not the str of n



The 'State of Europe during the Middle Ages,' is full of information for all who desire to be informed of the political and social condition of those kingdoms and states which arose out of the ruins and ashes of the empire of Rome. To show order emerging from confusion, the decisions of law taking place of those of passion and violence, and a line of defence raised to protect the weak and the peaceable against the strong and the tyrannous, was the task which Hallam assigned to himself; and he has accomplished all he undertook. \*The Constitutional History of England' seems a less necessary work; to separate the ingredients of a nation's history, that an author may show his skill in the distribution, and be enabled to serve us up constitutional, martial, and domestic courses of our national story, shows, at least, a questionable taste. It is like writing the history of the left hand, and neglecting that of the right: our achievements in establishing our present constitution, are interwoven too closely with the broad web of our whole history, to be separated advantageously. The dawn of liberty in Scotland is mingled with the light of burning towns, and is part of that supernatural radiance which Bruce saw when he returned from exile to assert the independence of his country. Its fuller light shone on the ranks of the Roundheads, when, inspired by liberty, they overthrew Charles and his chivalry. In truth, constitutional freedom and deeds of daring, both in the cabinet and in the field, go hand in hand; and to give us the constitutional portion, is to tear history asunder, and present us with one of the bleeding members. We have not yet obtained a right history of Britain—a history addressed both to the eye and the understanding; one gives us a historical romance, another a philosophic disquisition, while a third looks on all through the contracted aperture of religious bigotry. I know not that Henry Hallam is equal to such an undertaking, but no one could approach it with a better spirit or more extensive learning.

In placing ISAAC D'ISRAËLI among historians, I know not that I am right; he is, however, a great writer of some kind, and all his productions are of a historic character. He is one of the most learned, intelligent, lively, and agreeable authors of our era; he has composed a series of works, which, while they shed abundance of light on the character and condition of literary men, and show us the state of genius in this land, have all the attractions for general readers of the best romances. He has a quick eye for finding rich materials in barren places; he will detect an anecdote, which gives the key to some mysterious matter in literature, in the crumpled corner of a mildewed parchment; or, from a pencil note on the margin of some forgotten book, supply the world with matter for a month's talk, on the folly or the wisdom of men of genius. No one need think of writing the lives of our poets and historians, without borrowing light from his pages; and whoever continues Warton, will find that D'Israeli has prepared the way. His 'Commentaries on the Life and Reign of Charles the First,' exhibit all the research, the learning, and sometimes more than the animation of his earlier works. That he has executed this very difficult task in the spirit of philosophy and candour, has been questioned by some, and, indeed, it could not well be otherwise. There are men in our land, who never look on Charles otherwise than as an odious and perjured tyrant, and on those who shed his blood, as the upright and the pure. The Presbyterians of his time seem to have had the truest notion of things; they did not desire to destroy, nor even dethrone Charles; their object was to establish a constitution restraining both king and people within the bounds of moderation and justice; but this suited neither

the Cavaliers nor the Independents. I see it intimated, that D'Israeli has the History of British Literature in contemplation; he cannot do a more acceptable service to the republic of letters, than write it.

## BIOGRAPHY.

THE penury of British biography was remarked by Johnson; he did much, indeed, to remove the reproach, and succeeding writers have added largely to the structure which he may be said to have commenced. We had, before his day, individual biographies, such as Sprat's 'Life of Cowley,' and Cibber's 'Apology,' remarkable for elegance of eulogium and liveliness of detail, but we had no connected series of Lives before those of the Poets, and even in these, some of the greatest poets England has produced, are omitted. It was the object of Johnson to exhibit the genius as well as the persons of the poets; to give us their mental picture along with their bodily, and I know of no writer who has equalled him. He knew it was by their intellect that they had purchased the distinction of biography; succeeding biographers, and among them BOSWELL, have thought differently; we have diaries rather than memoirs, and letters substituted for characters. The importance of the individual in the eyes of the world, has not at all been attended to; instead of forty pages, we have four hundred, and instead of a hundred, a thousand. Men about whom the world had no solicitude, have come into the market with their 'Life and Times,' and we have been deluged with accounts of writings that were never read, and of books published but to be forgotten. Boswell's 'Life of Johnson' led to these inflictions; but then, Johnson was long at the head of our literature—was for many years the 'Triton of the minnows,' and renowned besides, over the civilized world, for the wit and wisdom of his sayings. It is not that he said lively and witty things, but that he said wise ones also, that we peruse the minute account of his biographer with a pleasure which never tires. The great beauty of the Memoir of Johnson is, that the sage is recalled to life, placed at our side, and we are made to see as well as hear him—not scattering his pearls in solitude, but surrounded by the choice spirits of his day—Burke, Reynolds, Percy, Goldsmith. The chief fault of the performance is, that it wants the splendid summary, and final judgment of character, which forms the crowning glory to the 'Lives of the Poets.' We are left to draw our own conclusions from the anecdotes and indications of Boswell, and the consequence is, that every one forms a mental character according to his abilities or prejudices, and nothing is fixed or defined.

'The Life of Burns,' by JAMES CURRIE, followed that of Johnson; this was a labour of love and of charity. The great poet had died in poverty, his children were left without bread, and no one appeared to befriend them, save the good and generous Currie, who undertook the task of arranging the disordered papers, preparing a Life of the Poet, and giving the whole to the world, with the hope that the profits would save a deserving woman and her fatherless children from the uncertain charity of their country. In this he was not disappointed. The memory of Burns owes much to his biographer; everywhere, a deep sympathy is confessed for his hard fortune; his life is delineated with considerable skill, and his character as a poet is such as the world has sanctioned. To do all this, required some resolution; the fame of Burns was but in its infancy—the world had not made up its mind on his merits; many, like Mrs. Barbauld, classed him with the inspired Pipe-maker of Bristol; and few, perhaps, imagined that the homely verses of the glorious peasant were to take a high place among the poetry of Britain. Nor was this all: the learned and the ingenious—

## Far seen in Greek, deep men of letters—

could not but dislike to be told that a flash of nature's fire was worth a whole Vauxhall Garden of artificial lights; and they were unwilling to believe, but that the way to Parnassus, like that to the Law and the Church, lay through a college: the poet too had been imprudent as a politician, opinions such as he entertained were little cherished in those days; and the Hayleys and the Peter Pindars were not likely to be pleased with his being elevated a head and shoulders higher than themselves—in short, there was much to hinder and little to encourage Currie in doing justice to his genius, and placing him where nature had intended. His biographer was no timid man, and yet he seems to have had his misgivings; there is something like a tone of apology throughout the Life, as if he were suspicious that good society would resent the introduction of the inspired and audacious peasant among them.

As a compact and regular memoir, the work is a failure, for it is made up of many parts, and consists of four or five narratives from different hands, which, though confirmatory of each other, occasion ungraceful repetitions. The charm lies in the perfect sincerity, fine sensibility, and easy style of the whole composition. It is accompanied too by a dissertation on the character and condition of the Scottish peasantry, which shows an intimate knowledge and love of the subject, and that Currie himself had in his youth practised much of what he describes. Nocturnal love excursions; adventures at kirk suppers and house-heatings, and the effect of music upon the laborious peasantry, are all described with an ardour and a feeling which could not come through the cold medium of hearsay. This excellent man died much too soon for his country; he had risen to high fame as a physician; had distinguished himself by his writings—and still more by his edition of Burns—a gift, and a noble one, to the poet's widow and children—when he was cut off in the forty-eighth year of his age.

The name of WILLIAM HAYLEY is numbered with the biographers of the age; he is the author of a 'Life of Romney,' and of the 'Life of Cowper.' For the first, he collected materials from the lips of the painter, and was further stimulated by a present of pictures; and, for the second, he had at his disposal the numerous and admirable letters of the poet, in which the secluded man tells his own simple story, and speaks so much of himself, as to leave little for his biographer to communicate. Yet, it cannot be said that Hayley has written anything like permanent works; much of what he relates of Romney has been contradicted or questioned by his son; he takes higher ground, too, than the painter's genius can maintain. The Life of Cowper is only relieved from unelevated mediocrity, by the fine letters with which the narrative is embellished. The biographer seems not to feel the peculiar genius of his subject; his language is formal, measured, and cold, and it has that laboured look, which, though according to the rules of composition, wants familiarity and freedom, to interest and warm. There is a sort of Spitzbergen air breathed over the narrative, and yet it is written by one whose talents the world thought highly of, and to whose opinion in all things painters and poets bowed. All this is easily explained: he lived in days when polish held the place of vigour, and harmony that of feeling; and poetry was judged as a song is now, by the sweetness of its music. In all the external of verse, he was a master; as he moved in good society, his opinions spread and prevailed; and though he penned cold quartos both in prose and verse, no one imagined that the weariness they felt in perusal, could come from the accomplished author of 'The Triumphs of Temper.'

WILLIAM GIFFORD wrote a short account of his own eventful life, and a 'Memoir of Ben Jonson,' the former accompanies a translation of Juvenal, and the latter an admirable edition of the works of the dramatist. What he relates of himself, is without the ostentation which disgusts us sometimes in men who have risen from a humble condition; there is no showing of rags and ailments to excite commiseration, nor a parade of early ignorance, to make us marvel at the wisdom of manhood; all is easy, simple, and sincere. The Life of Ben Jonson is remarkable for its old English lore; for sagacity of criticism, and skill in detecting faults in others, and excellence in the works of his hero; nay, it is, with all its blemishes, an acceptable addition to our biography, and cannot be read without admiration of the tact displayed in the detection of manifold errors, in those who have written about or alluded to Jonson or his dramas. But it is a controversy rather than a memoir: to be sensitive about the genius and the personal merits of the poet, is right and proper, and to vindicate his memory was a duty: but Gifford is much more than that; he is the rude and fierce assailant of all, living or dead, who stand in the path over which he conducts his narrative; he imputes malice to one, envy to another, and ignorance to a third, hob nob, and at random. He has endeavoured to show that the epithet "surly," which was bestowed on his hero, ought to be exchanged for the word gentle—that Ben had no intention of alluding to Inigo Jones in his plays, though he has introduced him, ticketed and labelled, like one of the Allegories of Rubens; and he labours hard to remove the unfavourable impressions which the memoranda of his conversations with Drummmond of Hawthornden have made on the world. Much of what he attempted, he has not been able to do; he has, however, established his own fame as a ready, a learned, a sarcastic, and energetic writer.

Of the biographical labours of WILLIAM GODWIN I am unable to give an account at all satisfactory to myself. In his 'Life of Mary Wolstonecroft' he has written little and said much; and in his account of Chaucer, he has written much and said little. Of the former, it has been his pleasure to relate more than what he is now perhaps willing to read: the picture which he gives us of the weakness and the strength of that remarkable woman is of the life size, minute in the details, and, like the portraits of Rembrandt, vividly bright, amid a vast deal of darkness. He lays down the principles of his singular philosophy with much plainness, and describes the way in which his wife fulfilled them, with consummate *naïveté*. He has sacrificed his fine genius too much to false gods. In his 'Life of Chaucer' he has written a romance: all that can be related with certainty of the father of English poetry is, that he lived in the days of Edward the Third, wrote his inimitable poems, and died; some go so far as to surmise that he beat a friar in Fleet-street, and, of course, was otherwise than in the good graces of the church. It has been said that a spoonful of truth will colour an ocean of fiction; and so it is seen in Godwin's 'Life of Chaucer': he heaps conjecture upon conjecture—dream upon dream—theory upon theory; scatters learning all around, and shows everywhere a deep sense of the merits of the poet; yet all that he has related might have been told in a twentieth part of the space which he has taken. His remarks are sagacious, his knowledge extensive, and when he has a straightforward tale to tell, he acquits himself like the author of 'Caleb Williams.'

MALCOLM LAING is the author of a new kind of biography: other writers usually desire to honour the persons of whom they treat; they consider

it their duty to vindicate where they are aspersed—to glorify the genius round which they are entwining their own. Laing is a biographer of another fashion: he singles out a man of genius to pluck the laurel from his brow, and then point him out for the contempt of mankind. I allude to his Life and Works of James Macpherson. The world saw with surprise a splendid edition of the Poems of Ossian, and a long and elaborate Life of the Translator—the aim and scope of which was to prove that Ossian was a shadow—a wreath of mist on Cromla; and that Macpherson was a forger—a person

Abhorred of men, and dreadful even to gods.

Had Macpherson forged a fifty-pound note, and got the cash from Laing, he could not have been treated more unworthily: he is looked upon as a highland Catheran, who has made a descent on the Lowlands, and marched away with much "bestial." In truth, though the practice is not to be commended, he cheated none but antiquarians; to the bulk of mankind it was a matter of no moment, whether the poems sprung from old times or from new: the pictures they contained and the sentiments they expressed were of an original order of poetry; and though the hue-and-cry raised against them by men of genius in England was not little, they forced their way into general notice, and were received with much rapture all over Germany. That Laing has acquitted himself cleverly in the merciless task he undertook, has never been questioned; but he discovered resemblances where they did not exist, and detected imitations with an ingenuity which defeated its own purpose. It is yet a question how much of these works belong to antiquity: the names, many of the actions, and some of the composition, have been proved of old date.

The biographical works of SIR WALTER SCOTT are among the most readable things in the language: he has a hearty love for every character he draws, and sympathizes in every life he writes. I know not that his narratives have the unity and consistence which may be observed, for instance, in Southey's 'Nelson,' but they have passages and chapters of uncommon vivacity and brightness: the life of the individual is shown with all its light and shade, and the gauge of his mind is given with remarkable accuracy. The Lives of Dryden and of Swift are not equal to his brief and happy sketches of the Novelists: the narratives are too long and too minute. The merits, however, of Dryden are of so high a kind, both in verse and prose, that particularity may be pardoned: he was among the first to lay down critical rules for dramatic composition; and there is a manly vigour and reach in his prefatory dissertations, which have been equalled, but not surpassed; to give us the history, therefore, of his varied works, was to read us a bright chapter on our literature;—not so with Swift: the writings of that fine wit are almost all on temporary and passing topics: he had a personal aim in all he wrote; he desired to humble others, if not to exalt himself; and consequently his fame suffered as the matters of which he treated were forgotten. It may be said, and with truth, that his writings on that very account required to be redeemed from the obscurity in which some of them are beginning to be involved: my meaning is, that the extent of a memoir should be in proportion to the fame of the author; and in this respect Swift cannot be compared to Dryden. In truth, the writings of Johnson had embalmated them both, and little more, save notes to their works, was required.

It was otherwise with the Novelists: the characters of Smollett, Fielding, and Richardson, had not, like those of Dryden and Swift, been drawn by the hand of a master: we only knew the men through their works—an imperfect way

of obtaining knowledge. We see them now as they were in life; not coarser, or less delicate than the age in which they lived, but reflecting the manners, and feelings, and language of their day, in a mirror true and clear. Their merits are set in a fair light; and though I think, for variety and invention, Smollett far excelled his companions, there is little can be added to the characters which Scott has depicted. He extracts, as it were, the square root of their talents, and gives us the result; we have the pith and essence in small space: like Dryden's estimate of Shakespeare, nothing is wanting of the magnificent or the minute: other writers may expand, but they cannot improve; they may use more words, but they can add nothing to the sentiment. His intimate knowledge of the art in which these three excelled, enabled him to accomplish this without any effort; he never labours or strains; he is always master of his subject; and when he has given the leading features, and added a few strong and few delicate touches, he leaves us to admire the vivid image, and hastens to a new undertaking, to perform the same wonders.

This is to see him in his happiest moods: he is fond of disquisitions, and speaks not always to the point; he makes occasional mistakes; and he can be minute till he becomes tedious. He wants the critical sagacity of Johnson, and the exquisite purity of language of Southey; but he is equal to either in frequent and happy touches, in lucid and picturesque narrative, and in the right estimate of genius and summary of character. His Account of the Novelists is worthy of being classed with the Lives of the Poets.

The most perfect piece of biography in the language is the 'Life of Nelson,' by ROBERT SOUTHY: it is as complete and well-proportioned as the finest statue; all is handsome, graceful, and expressive; there are no parts weak and languid, and none more colossal and massive than strict harmony allows. Those who wish to excel in biography would act wisely in studying this noble work: they will see with what wonderful, and all but invisible art, it is composed, and yet feel that all is so simple, so easy, and so natural, that art is out of the question. In the conception of the Memoir, the author has like a skilful gardener who inoculates a barren bough with a bearing bud, brought collateral matter to give life to the duller or less interesting parts; nor has he, out of a false love for his hero, painted his character in the Sir Charles Grandison style of perfection; he has spoken of the failings of the man with deserved compassion, and of the nobleness of his nature with merited rapture. The 'Life of Wesley' is scarcely inferior in interest; for he was an ardent man with great moral courage, presence of mind, and unflinching eloquence. His adventures in propagating the Gospel—for his labours deserve the description—among the illiterate swarms in country and town, have all the interest of romance: he had the profane to silence and sooth, the sluggish to animate and inspire, the giddy to sober, and the profligate to reclaim. That he undertook much, and accomplished much, in the cause of religion, is well known; and those, and they cannot be many, who happen to be ignorant of it, will enlighten themselves and gain a happy day by reading the account of the biographer. The 'Memoir of John Bunyan,' as well as that of Kirke White, is another beautiful narrative: the inspired tinker is drawn with all the life and simplicity of one of the characters in his inimitable 'Pilgrim's Progress.' Southey is now engaged on the Lives of the British Admirals—a task worthy of his genius.

Several lives have been written of Burns the poet: that of JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART is the last and best. He has felt better than any one the

fresh and natural energy, the manly breadth, and free, unsophisticated character of his hero, He has sympathized largely with him; he has comprehended his condition, and mastered his peculiarities. He has not stood on his own hill retired, and looked at the rustic bard through the false medium of position; he has descended into the valley, and accompanied him to the plough, the dance, and the "cannic hour at e'en," and has felt and enjoyed all. It is this which has enabled him to lighten those darker hues of character, which give a gloom to the narratives of less considerate biographers, and show the poet standing on his own feet like a man, erect and dignified, conscious of his powers and of his title to immortality.

PATRICK FRASER TYTLER has added largely to our national biography: the 'Lives of the Scottish Worthies' are distinguished by great candour and no common research; he has estimated the military talents of one, and the poetic genius of another, with nice discrimination. He has an earnestness of manner which wins on the most inattentive reader. It is true, that he curtailed Scotland of her fair proportion of worthies; we have a hundred as good as those of whom he wrote; and he would do well to complete his task before he continues his invasion upon the Lives of the Worthies of the South. His 'Life of Raleigh' is full and satisfactory: he went about this undertaking in a true spirit; having mastered the materials, he fixed his abode on the sea coast, where Raleigh was born and brought up; then refreshed his eyes with hill and sea, and warmed his mind with contemplation, and so proceeded to pen the Memoir. This has imparted a freshness of look to the old materials used, and an energy to the new.

I know of no biography from which I have derived more pleasure than an account of himself and his family, appended by LEIGH HUNT, to his 'Life of Byron.' It is full of life and fine humanities: the gossip is the most agreeable gossip in the world; the writer is on fair terms with himself—and I see no reason he has to be otherwise: the egotism is all *naïveté*; nor is it unmingled with snatches of right feeling and bits of true criticism: save the 'Apology' of Cibber, I know of nothing better. His account of Byron the world resented as an indignity offered to one whom it had itself too much insulted: we were in a fit of repentance, and reparation was the cry; it was no proof of good taste in Hunt to come out with his recollections of the mighty poet so soon after his death; nor was it perhaps right in him at all to speak so openly of the conduct of one who had laid him under a pecuniary obligation. But he seems not to have erred much in matters of fact.

Of the same great poet another Memoir was written by JOHN GALT, who had already shown some biographical skill in his account of Benjamin West. His familiar intercourse with the painter enabled him to give peculiar interest to his account of his early aspirations; and his meeting with the poet amid the scenes of his glory, lent the charm of reality to his narrative, which was widely felt by the world. For this Memoir Galt obtained high praise, and very sharp censure. He in a great measure merited all the praise; he spoke with much manliness and freedom; his details were picturesque, and his remarks generally just and candid—he did not deserve a tithe of the censure poured upon him both in verse and prose. The life of Lord Byron was free to the pens of all men: no one could urge a particular claim to the exclusion of others; and if merit constituted a claim, surely the author of the 'Annals of the Parish,' and 'The Provost,' stood high enough to entitle his name to be mentioned with reverence. He was, however, treated with very little ceremony: he was first of all lampooned for presuming to intimate his intention of writing

a life; and secondly, he was passed beneath "the saws and harrows" of criticism, when the work made its appearance. Comparing the statements which the Life contained with the facts detailed in the authentic narrative which followed, Galt will be found less frequently wrong than the critics have intimated. Little has been since revealed, even by his most steadfast friend and admirer, to elevate the character of Byron as a man. Galt has lately given to the world his Autobiography: it contains much that is valuable and curious, and is remarkable for a certain sincere homeliness of language.

THOMAS MOORE has written three different biographies—all unlike each other in manner as well as matter. The first is the 'Life of Sheridan'—a work displaying eloquence and spirit, with a certain dash of boldness, which made it acceptable to all who loved free utterance of feeling. It abounds, too, in happy expressions; in sentiments in which nature is almost smothered with ornament; and in critical opinions, most of which came from the heart. Its fault lies in claiming too high a station among the sons of the morning for Sheridan, who had a vast deal of the artificial about his genius: he made his scenes for his wit, and not his wit for his scenes; his best things hang on the dialogue like jewels upon an image; his wit does not circulate through it, and belong to it as blood to the body. The language of the Memoir is highly embellished; nothing can less resemble the simplicity of Southey's 'Nelson' than Moore's 'Sheridan.'

The 'Life of Byron,' which followed, showed a complete change of taste in composition: figures of speech were used sparingly; the ornamental was almost utterly discarded; liveliness was repressed, and all was made grave, and simple, and even severe. The new attire in which the muse of biography appeared, was pronounced by many beautiful and becoming. To all, however, it was not so welcome. Simplicity of language requires the frequent recurrence of massive vigour of sentiment; his former richness—nay, gaudiness of language, concealed ordinary thoughts; and the new style of the writer was in the eyes of many like a fruit tree robbed of its fruit, or a crown despoiled of its jewels. Nor was this all: Byron had penned memoranda of all he thought or did; and as much that he thought and did was not worthy of being known, a judicious biographer, out of respect to the world as well as for the sake of the poet, should have interpreted him through his own medium rather sparingly. It is true, that Moore had a task to perform of no ordinary difficulty: in the latter years of his life, the Poet had sinned deeply against the decorum of society, both in word and deed: much that he wrote, and much that he said and did, was in defiance of the opinion, though perhaps not the practice, of mankind. The work has, however, many beauties: it shows the poet at home in his study; it exhibits him full dressed in the public places; and it displays him joyous with wine and gladdened with witty company. It discloses his inmost thoughts: now he is stung to the heart by some allusion to his lameness, or some stern attack on his poetry; then he is seen gloomy, and even fierce, pondering over the shipwreck of his fortune and the ruin of his domestic peace; presently we have him penning some wild lampoon, or bidding defiance to fate, and resolving, since he was going to destruction, to go his own road. Nor are there wanting hours of melting weakness and despondency, when he looks back on "prospects drear," and with dread on the dark and ominous future.

Of the 'Life of Fitzgerald,' I know not well what to say; perhaps it ought never to have been written: how he could sympathize with one who desired to give Ireland to France, I cannot comprehend.

## THE DRAMA.

This is a part of my undertaking which I enter upon with a consciousness that if Poetry has kept its station, and Romance risen, in the Drama there is a visible descent. Not so much, indeed, in its poetry, for that is still high, as in the sobering of its high feeling—the taming of its wild passion; a coldness has crept over its fiery vehemence, and its nature is less the nature of the heart. Neither is the true character of dramatic composition so well understood as heretofore; the writers seem to forget that all is addressed to the eye as well as to the mind; the pure and eloquent blood of the drama no longer speaks in her veins like that of the poet's mistress: we are grown too retrospective; we describe rather than perform; the meaning is not made good by sensible signs;—and this is true of much of our poetry as well as of the drama. The life of the dialogue is wanting. Shakspeare, I need not say, is full of it; his plays would be understood by an audience were they acted in pantomime. We are civilized till we are grown barbarous: ask a question of a country peasant respecting a road, he points with his finger as well as moves his tongue: a Frenchman, it has been said, could not tell a story with his hands tied; he has a dramatic feeling, and calls in action to the aid of words, as our great poet does—

I saw a smith lean o'er his anvil thus,

We are grown cold, courteous, and civilized; we live in continual proprieties both of action and of tongue; it requires a bold, rough, free, outspoken person to be a good dramatic writer; but where is such a person to be found in days when we "duck with French nods," and exclaim in "apeish courtesy"? Moreover, our principal theatres are totally unfit for calling forth the true beauties of the drama; wit and humour, and all the richness of the dialogue, are swallowed up in the infinite space between the stage and the boxes; every third word uttered is not heard by ordinary ears; and actors have to strain their voices, till their natural tone is lost, and all is forced, exaggerated, and unnatural. We are also grown too wise to be pleased rapturously with anything; we have too many ways of amusing ourselves—shows of all kinds, books of every description, "and Katterfelto, with his hair on end," wondering at his own wonders: this makes us fastidious; peradventure we are grown critical; we know, or, what is worse, pretend to know everything; we judge the drama, and we pass sentence on the actors; we come with no wish to be pleased, but to be critical. An author who writes a book gets a calm audience; if God and nature are in him, the world will acknowledge it; if not immediately, after a lapse of days. A dramatic writer has a twofold dread upon him; he may be damned on account of the actors as well as from his want of wit. Another lion in the path is your great actor—your red-letter hero of the advertisement and play-bill. The poet must fit this man's body, and suit this man's mouth, in the manufacture of dramatic character: the fiery and impassioned Kean required a whole play to himself; he gave the little senate of Parnassus laws; and he who wrote a drama, in which, as in 'Brutus,' one character swallowed up all the others, was sure to write best. Nor was Kean alone in this; any one who reads the 'Correspondence of Garrick,' will see at once that he was the great dry-nurse of dulness in dramatic composition in his day. He was a pruner and a slasher; he pollarded the dramatic tree; nor was his judgment in composition worth a farthing; he could not perceive the excellence of the tragedy of 'Douglas'; he looked upon the raptures of the mother over her long-lost son, and the heroic rising of the youth's heart, as nought. The drama has, in our day, declined towards the picturesque and the mechanical.



The fame of RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN, as a wit and a dramatist, is deservedly high; his beginning was as bright and glorious as his latter days were dark and deplorable; in his twenty-third year he wrote 'The Rivals,' and in his twenty-sixth year 'The School for Scandal'—comedies abounding with knowledge of character and manners, and flashes of wit and spirit, which show genius and extensive observation. He was idle at school, and acquired so little Greek and Latin, as almost to countenance a reproach of deficiency in classical attainments; but he was idle only in the eyes of pedants; he was reading lessons in living life, and laying in treasures of a mental kind, such as no schools can supply. His mode of composition shows a laborious man; his comedies were not produced by a sudden effort of fancy; nothing that he wrote came spontaneously and unbidden from his mind; all was slow and tardy, showing a bit-by-bit process of construction, which promised nothing like the beauty it produced, and seemed alien to a mind sensitive and vehement. All that he wrote was the result of extraordinary labour; the germ of a fine thing was perceived by him in its rough state; and he wrought and refined till the wit came out brilliant and resistless from his skilful hand. The numerous sketches which he made of the plans of his plays, and the detached bits of dialogue which he amassed for use, prove that his genius was not quick and forgetful, but was content to creep to the mark at which others flew.

Something of this may be perceived in his scenes; they are full of wit and humour; but the wit and humour float on the stream of the dialogue rather than form a part of it; the scene seems to have been made for the things with which he ornaments it. Some of his best characters are not original: Mrs. Malaprop may be found in all her natural splendour in Fielding—coarser, indeed, but infinitely happier. Yet no one cares how the wit comes that pleases, nor where the original of the character is to be found that helps us to laugh. All that he does is spirited; all that he says is witty; his dialogue is unlike that of all other dramatists, and seems copied from real life—from what he happened to observe and hear in polite society. There is, however, very little action, and very little warmth; no spontaneous bursts of unaffected feeling—all is polished and well bred; there is a want of heart, for which the presence of almost all other beauties cannot atone. Sheridan soon became weary of seeking fame at such outlay of labour: his wit made his company acceptable to the Prince of Wales and his gay companions; and he was content to set the table in a roar in Carlton House, in preference to shaking Old Drury with his sallies from rafter to foundation stone. It is true that he distinguished himself as an orator in the Commons, and for some time seemed as if about to take the lead; but wine and indolence prevailed: even long speeches, such as his, required preparation; and he became weary of that, and was content with the fame of being the most brilliant talker, the greatest conversational wit of the splendid circle in which he moved.

He reproached himself now and then as a waster of great powers; and in fits of remorse planned scenes for future plays, and penned passages of never spoken dialogues. That he drew his materials from life, all his scraps and fragments testify: in something like the rudiments of a play on Affectation, we find the following outline of a scene attached to Lady Clive. "What am I reading? Have I drawn nothing lately? Has the man been to untune the harpsichord? Does it look as if I had been playing on it? Shall I be ill to-day?—shall I be nervous?"—"Your La'ship was nervous yesterday."—"Was I? then I'll have a cold: I haven't had a cold this fortnight—a cold is becoming:—no, I'll not have a cough, that's

fatiguing: I'll be quite well."—"Your La'ship always looks vastly well when you're ill—you become sickness."—"Leave the book half read, and the rose half finished; you know I love to be caught in the fact." An intriguing man is intimated with equal truth in another broken dialogue:—"Who am I in love with now?"—"You are laying close siege to Lady L. in the *Morning Post*, and have succeeded with Lady G. in the *Herald*; Sir F. is very jealous of you in the *Gazetteer*."—"Remember, to-morrow, the first you do put me in love with Mrs. C. I forgot to forget the *billet-doux* at Brooks's." If something like this is to be found in earlier writers, it only proves that affectation is true to all times and countries.

Of his poetry little can be said; it is weak in its flow, and wants fire and nature: it comes reluctantly from his mind when he desires to be tender or graceful; and if it comes easy at all, it is when he is peevish and personal. He addressed the Prince of Wales concerning the exposing style of women's dress: I know not what the Prince said in reply. The poem included some political seasoning, and lamented that the atrocities in apparel, so displeasing to delicate persons, should have been sought for in France, since absurdity might have been found at home. His genius was high, but not of the first order; it was imitative rather than inventive; he could embellish, but he could not create; he could see, but not imagine.

JOANNA BAILLIE stands, by all but universal consent, at the head of the modern drama; she has exhibited such force of nature, such knowledge of the world, and painted so vividly the light and shade of passion, that I know of no one who can be named with her. In all her dramas, there is uncommon breadth and massive vigour; great variety of situation and character; a vehement and nervous eloquence, and everywhere a strong unstudied happy force of language, such as the stage demands. In the pathetic scenes, she approaches Shakspeare; her dialogues are full of thought; she is no dealer in splendid nothings; she has the language of the muse, she has likewise her inspiration; and we are not only moved and agitated, but we come away from her scenes with an accession of knowledge. The masculine energy of her language has been noticed by all her critics. Her muse should be drawn with the serene dignity and austere composure of an antique statue—the muse of others might be painted with wings and starry trains; she is compact, they are diffuse; she speaks to the point, they speak to show their wit, not to help on the story. Her works have not risen into fame without remark or remonstrance; she calls her dramas 'Plays on the Passions,' and this has provoked a vast deal of sarcastic criticism, and caused writers to allege that she desired to limit the boundless range of tragedy, and exhibit in a play one passion, and no more. She is wrong in the name of her dramas, and right in conception and execution; she meant that each play had its ruling passion, as almost all other plays have, like love in *Romeo and Juliet*, and the jealousy of *Othello*. The passion which she undertakes to display, comes with others in its train; jealousy goes hand in hand with anger and revenge, and love is too often allied to fear and jealousy: there is abundance of subordinate emotion, no limitation whatever.

She has spoken the poetic language of her day, nor sought to dip her thoughts in the obsolete hues of antiquity; she felt that the language of the illustrious bards of the days of Elizabeth was natural to them, but unnatural to her; and as she loathes all affectation, she took the tone and colour of speech in her own time. This has given to her works an original and unborrowed air. In the plot and distribution of time, she

avails herself of the liberties of the romantic drama, while, in many things else, she resembles the stern statue-like drama of the classic era. Some of her characters might be studied in the presence of the antique statues—for their heroic dignity and perfect individuality of representation. She is, in poetry, what Flaxman was in sculpture; and by the side of some of his noble personifications of Scripture we might place the works of Joanna Baillie. She does not tell you what was, but, sculptor like, she shows you what is: she never loses sight of the object she has in view; she neither hides her heroes under the dazzling splendour of their coats armorial, nor overwhelms the distinct beauty of her thoughts in the flowers of embellished language. This sometimes gives a bold austerity to parts of her dialogues, which, taken by itself, is far from pleasing. If she is austere, she is never cold; she is sarcastic and ironical, but there is no fixed unkindliness of disposition about her; she sympathizes with the world, and feels deeply for human sorrow; but she is no pining lady who weeps for a cut finger, or goes into hysterics when a mantua's pinned away.

When the Author of 'Waverley' wrote the introduction to 'The Fortunes of Nigel,' he hinted in a humorous way, his intention of writing a drama, not, he said, in imitation of Lord Byron, for his Lordship was a cut above him, but in the vein of a much humbler writer, who had just published a dramatic attempt. Soon afterwards, 'Halidon Hill,' by Sir Walter Scott, was announced, and as the great poet had for some time abandoned the muses, his unlooked for re-appearance excited great expectations. The work was not, however, a regular drama; those who expected a play divided into scenes and acts expressed disappointment, and added to their complaint, that the language was neither that of Shakspeare, nor so bold and dashing as those snatches of dramatic verse were, which introduced the chapters of the 'Waverley Novels.' Others, who perused the work for the pleasure likely to be derived from it, were inclined to think much more favourably. There is, in truth, a heroic feeling, and a pathos, diffused all through the scenes, with which the modern drama has little to compare. The character of old Sir Allan Swinton—who had lived to see his seven sons fall, and to avenge them; and that of young Gordon, the son of his enemy, whose father he had slain in avenging the blood of his children, are drawn with great discrimination, and are such as no one can read audibly, without attesting their influence with tears. The fault as a piece of dramatic composition, is a frequent glancing back at other days, when heroic deeds were done; in fact, it could not well be otherwise, for the conception of the story required it. There is also too much description.

The poet, in his play of 'Auchincranne,' displayed real tragic power, and soothed all those who cried out before for a more direct story and less of the retrospective. Several of the scenes are conceived and executed with all the powers of the best parts of 'Waverley'; the verse, too, is more rough, natural, and nervous, than that of 'Halidon Hill'; but, noble as the effort was, it was eclipsed so much by his splendid romances, that the public still complained that he had not done his best, and that his genius was not dramatic. This was unfair: he had led the way in poetry and romance, and there was nothing in those fine works to disprove his genius for the drama. The great—the unrivalled command which he exercised over character; the skill with which he evolved his incidents; the bright and living colours in which he delineated all he touched—all seemed to indicate the possession of dramatic qualities such as might ensure success. But there is a great difference in these various kinds of compositions; the romance

allows glancings back—nay, goings back and steppings forward; part may be exhibited in conversation like a play, and part can be described like the chorus in a Greek tragedy, but in the dramas of our own day, all must be addressed to the eye and to the ear. The writer should ever keep in mind, that he has a large audience to instruct, and that they must gain their knowledge from the speech and action of the actors. That Scott knew all this, his letters written to his friends on dramatic composition, sufficiently show; but he was not the first great writer who laid down rules which he could not himself follow. I am, however, inclined to think, that had he addressed himself seriously to the drama, he would have distinguished himself as much as he did in the fields of romance.

The genius of COLERIDGE is poetic rather than dramatic. His poetry is rich and glowing; it abounds in lofty sentiments; there is a picturesque splendour in its imagery, and a luxuriance of fancy, such as few have equalled. But he delights in the metaphysical and the obscure; he is not plain enough for the public, and has suffered in reputation with the crowd, though not at all in the opinion of those who can appreciate the true beauties of imagination. His play of 'Remorse' was well received by the world, and warmly applauded; it abounds in scenes of great force and feeling. The plot is far from clear, and not very probable, some of the principal characters, though always visible to their friends in their own proper persons, are sometimes known and sometimes not: Teresa cannot recognize her acquaintance Alvar, neither does Ordonio nor Isidore discover him. It requires, too, a more than common stretch of imagination to fill up the vacancies between the acts; the poet takes too long steps for probability. The beauty of the play is its picturesque poetry, and its fault is, that all is too imaginative, lofty, and majestic. We want commoner and every-day matters; we want more done and less said, and desire that the language should be plainer and more suitable to the comprehension of the audience. The following truly touching and splendid passage will illustrate my meaning: how few who heard it uttered, could understand its mysterious and learned allusion.

With no irreverent voice or uncouth charm  
I call up the departed. Soul of Alvar!  
Hear our soft suit. Since haply thou art one  
Of that innumerable company  
Who in broad circle lovelier than the rainbow  
Girdle this round earth in a dizzy motion,  
With noise too vast and constant to be heard:  
Filiest unheard! For, oh! ye numberless  
And rapid travellers, what ear, unstunned,  
What sense, unmaddened, might bear up against  
The rushing of your congregated wings! (Music.)  
Even now your living wheel turns o'er my head;  
Ye as ye pass toss high the desert sands,  
That roar and whiten like a burst of waters—  
A sweet appearance, but a dread illusion  
To the parched caravan that roams by night.  
And ye build up on the becalmed waves,  
That whirling pillar, which from earth to heaven  
Stands vast, and moves in blackness.

Through all this noble poem—for it is more a poem than a drama, there is a visible imitation of Shakespeare. "In general, his imitation," says one of his critics, "is of that judicious kind, which is felt everywhere and seen nowhere, a likeness of the whole rather than a copy of any part; in some instances, however, by boldly venturing to try his strength with his great master, he forces us to a comparison of particular passages which is not favourable to him. The imitation, for instance, of Hamlet's picture of his father and uncle, though not without some beautiful lines, appears to be the effort of an injudicious and mistaken ambition. It is one thing to invent, another to imitate; it is one thing, as by inspiration, to throw out a bright passage which shall become a text in the mouths of all men for ever, and another to study that passage, to enlarge its beauties, supply its defects, to prune

its luxuriances, and thus at length produce a faultless copy of an imperfect original." Coleridge gives us splendid passages, but he fails to connect them with matters of living and visible life, and must, as a dramatist, be content with the high fame which closest perusal brings.

[To be concluded on the 28th December.]

## SONNETS

BY SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

No. I.—Written Nov. 11, 1833.

## INSPIRATION COMES FROM WITHIN.

THE strings of every harp are not so fine  
That they will tremble to the tender breeze.  
Struck by rude hands, the hoarse and noisy  
clang

Of the World's music, utters accents loud—  
But there are lyres which some life divine  
Not only as reflecting echoes seize  
The murmurs pressed upon them, but have  
rang

With melodies untaught—as if endowed  
With some inherent spirit. From within  
Of come the notes that utter thoughts sublime,  
Some mystic strains our rapt attention win,  
Some airs unborrowed breathe the fabled rhyme:  
The muse inspires not from an outward throne,  
But in our soul's recesses sits alone.

No. II.—Written Nov. 12, 1833.

## POETS, THE INTERPRETERS OF OUTWARD CREATION.

THE Poet, in a sort of magic dream,  
Passes his magical existence here.  
Voices he hears, which meet no other ear,  
And sounds to him with secret meaning teem,  
Which dull and void of sense to others seem;  
Bright forms on airy pinions flitting near,  
Above him—and before his path appear,  
Which others nought but vacant vapour deem;  
'Tis when the comment of the poet's spell  
Gives language to creation's wondrous sight,  
That blinder spirits gain the power to tell  
What marvels in this earth are of delight—  
The beamy poet waves his vision'd wand,  
And Paradise awakes at his command.

## THE PERIODICAL PRESS OF GERMANY.

[A paper, under this title, by M. Marmier, has lately appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*: as it contains much interesting information on a subject on which the English public are but partially informed, we thought that an abridged translation might interest our readers.]

In attentively examining the periodical literature of a country, we become acquainted with the intelligence, the character, the literary and political bias of the nation; for, if it be true that the manners of any particular period are reflected in its literature as in a mirror, this truth is more especially applicable to Journalism, which is a vast diorama, displaying, in a series of moveable pictures, all that excites curiosity, and arouses the passions.

We may best examine the state of the public press, first, by calculating the number of journals; and then, by observing their language and opinions.

With reference to the first, Germany is superior to France. According to the table, published in the *Office-Correspondance*, France has only four hundred and fifty journals; whilst the Catalogue of Subscriptions, published by the Berlin post in 1833, presents seven hundred and eighty, published in the German language. The fact is, that, in Germany, every society, every sect, every science, and every association, has its representative; and this representative is a weekly or monthly journal. Go to Germany, and you will find abundance of religious and sectarian journals, school journals, journals that advocate certain theories, journals of voyages

and travels, journals of hunting, journals of trades, journals for peasants (*Bauernzeitung*), and also journals for villages (*Dorfzeitung*), which are concocted in cities or towns. In Germany, every man has a tendency to study and reflection: the smallest villages have their circulating libraries; and a tavern-keeper, who, for a few kreutzers, will pour you out a tumbler of beer, can also supply you, at your choice, with a political or a literary journal. The parson has always his journal; the burgomaster, his assistant, the schoolmaster, the judge, and the mechanic, have each their journal; and if you visit any German family on a Sunday evening, you will be sure to find the master of the house reading his journal aloud to the domestic circle around him. Another circumstance, which contributes to increase the number of periodicals in Germany, is, the division of the country into so many little independent states: each of these has its capital and its university; and every capital must have its *Moniteur*, and every university is eager to make known its peculiar mode of instruction, and display the erudition and talents of its professors.

Among this vast number of periodicals, the most extensive in sale, and important in character, are, the scientific and literary journals. With regard to the political papers, it is needless to point out the circumstances that still check freedom of discussion. The diet of Frankfurt casts a lynx eye over all those petty sovereignties, the safety of whose absolutism is entrusted to its keeping; it watches the journalists, scrutinizes their writings and their thoughts, gives a meaning to every doubtful word, translates every foreign quotation after its own humour, lectures the censors, and stimulates the zeal of the police agents. The absolute suppression of some papers, which had sung in a higher pitch than the conference admired, is calculated to teach editors prudence; and the captivity of Wirth, the courageous editor of the *Tribune Allemande*, may serve as a lesson to those who venture to resist the will of the diet. You must not, therefore, expect to find, in the German papers, a spark of that freedom which exists in those of England and France. The states termed constitutional, such as the territory of Baden, the kingdom of Wurtemberg, the duchy of Darmstadt, and some others, will indeed go so far as to tolerate a discussion on a project of law, or the examination of a ministerial measure; but even the deputies must proceed with so much tenderness of language, and so much circumlocution, that the forms imposed by the sensitive jealousy of the government, limit the powers of the speakers to a very narrow circle.

But enter the states in which the wishes of the diet are considered sacred and inviolable, and you will find it much worse. Do not, however, imagine that the journals in those states are got up without trouble. Quite the reverse: the poor editors are obliged sadly to torture their brains to arrange a fact, distort the meaning of a speech, or magnify a riot into an insurrection. Yet, some of these journals,—very few, I confess,—have, from their long standing and the influence which supports them, a number of subscribers that might raise envy in the most successful of the French journalists. The *Augsburg Gazette* circulates through the whole of Europe; the *Austrian Observer* sold six thousand copies; the *Spenersche Zeitung*, published at Berlin, sells at present ten thousand; and the *Leipziger Zeitung*, with an exclusive privilege which prevents all competition in Saxony, has, at least, eight thousand subscribers. Most of the German papers, whether political or literary, appear only on certain days of the week, and generally in quarto, with two columns, upon grey paper, and very badly printed. Compared with most of them, the *Almanach de Liege* might pass for a gem of engraving and typography.

It may naturally be asked, how it happens that a government, so severe towards its own journalists, should permit the importation of foreign journals? In the first place, it would be difficult to prevent such importation. In vain did the Austrian agents make the strictest search in the trunks of every traveller, and take away even a stray number of the *Constitutionnel*, serving to envelope half a dozen cravats: the Austrian people were not the less acquainted with every thing that passed in France. The government, therefore, now makes a merit of permitting that which it was unable to prevent. In the next place, the high price of foreign journals, and their being written in a foreign language, confine them to a limited circle of readers, consisting of men of independent fortune, professors, commercial men, and public officers, all of whom are anxious to live in peace. I must also observe, that foreign journals never act directly upon the mind of the German reader; because, for every sentence in the *Tribune* or the *National* that might make an impression, fifty pages in German would soon appear to efface it.

From the political to the scientific and literary periodicals of Germany, the transition is doubtless satisfactory, though not so much so as might be desired. Many of these publications, decorated with pompous titles, and often usurping reputations to which they are by no means entitled, must be lopped off like parasitical branches before the parent tree can be brought to bear none but sound and wholesome fruit. As, in Germany, each little town has its publishing bookseller, so each publisher has also his journal, in which he advertises his publications, and pulls his own books and those of his friends. This naturally leads to an exchange of courtesy, and a reciprocity of services, which destroys all sound and conscientious criticism. The Dresden publisher, for example, will announce, that his colleague at Berlin has just published a novel which everybody ought to buy; and the Berlin publisher, to show his gratitude, swears by the gods, that the poems published by his colleague of Dresden are truly admirable.

After these minor periodicals come the long-established journals, which live by their old reputations. There is something so good and so simple-minded in the German people, they have so religious a respect for the past,—that they are always disposed to assent without reflection to that which their forefathers believed, and to delight, when old, in the same things that pleased them in their youth. Hence, those old pieces of furniture, of which they are so careful; hence, those journals, which were read aloud in the family circle forty years ago, and are read there still. Neither the form nor the style of those publications are changed; and the pride of age prevents fathers of families from selecting a paper of less yellow hue, or more legible characters.

A third class of periodicals, not less absurd than the two former, consists of papers established to support certain theories and opinions; those small journals, affecting to be witty and satirical—the journals of amateur poets and tale writers, blue-stockings ladies in high life, and poetasters among the fashionable sprigs of nobility: the said journals inflated with praises of the poems by the Baron this, or the tales of my Lady that, or the dramas of my Lord Chamberlain; the whole forming a detestable mosaic of weak and silly imitations of the works of men of genius.

But, after all this trash, we come to those noble periodicals, full of talent and power, whose ascendancy is irresistible, and in which we see a true reflection of Germany, with its profound and serious character, its unceasing study, and its talent for observation. Among these, we must include the *Jahrbücher* of Vienna, remark-

able for the knowledge shown in it of history and philosophy; the *Jahrbücher* of Berlin, to which the pupils of Hegel, and, among others, M. Henning, have given so lofty a direction; the *Politisch Zeitschrift*, likewise published at Berlin, and in which M. Savigny boldly pours forth the treasures of science; the *Journal of Jurisprudence*, conducted by Hitzig; that of *Natural History*, in which M. de Camisso adds to the materials obtained by study and travel, the powers of his rich imagination; the *Jahrbücher* of Jena, and the *Journal of Göttingen*, both distinguished by the spirit of their criticism; and the *Journal of Music*, of which Hoffmann was once joint editor, and which has supported itself with equal success for the last forty years.

Among the exclusively literary journals, we must place the following in the first class: that published at Leipzig by Brokaus, under the title of *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*; the *Fremdwärter*, published at Berlin under the direction of Willibald Alexis Hering, the friend of Heine, and the author of Cabanis; the *Gesellschafter*, the articles of which are contributed by M. Gubitz, and most of the eminent litterati of Berlin; the *Magasin des Ausländer*, in which M. Lehman gives, with considerable taste and talent, the most striking foreign literary productions; and the *Zeitung für die elegante Welt*, published at Leipzig, whose contributors are men of well-known talent, and among them are Dr. Laub, and Professor Wolff, of Jena. But at the head of all stands the *Morgenblatt* of Stuttgart. This paper, which exercises immense influence, consists of three distinct parts: the first, like most of the German papers, contains only tales and poetry; the second, criticisms on works of art; then come the literary criticisms of Menzell, the orientalist, the philosopher, the historian, and the poet, who culls, right and left, from the vast collection of works he has to notice, assigning to each its proper place in the literary scale. Menzell's criticism is often bitterly sarcastic; it is that of a man who has read too much, and in whom sympathy for a new work would be as difficult to excite, as the appetite of a satiated epicure. With what disdainful pity does he not treat the formidable host of tales and poems, and modest pamphlets, and ponderous octavos which encumber his table! How bitter the irony which issues from the lips of this friend of Uhland and Tieck when a presumptuous young poet presents him with his love elegies and his dreams of sadness! how chilling the smile of mockery on the features of this patriotic and conscientious deputy of Wurtemberg, when works on history and politics are brought to him, clad in the livery of courtiership, and bearing the stamp of servility! But take away all that is too harsh in his language, and too cutting in his analysis of a work, and you will find in him a spirit of criticism, broad and profound, and which reaches to a degree of elevation that has become rare in Germany as well as in France; and what renders his opinions still more valuable is, that he never allows his judgment to be biased by personal considerations, nor even by feelings of friendship. Thus an opinion by Menzell has so much weight, that the success of a book, upon his verdict, may be discounted in ready cash as surely as the bill of a rich banker.

In drawing this brief sketch of the state of the periodical press in Germany, I must not omit a circumstance which speaks greatly in favour of French influence in foreign countries: I mean the publication of five French journals—one at Frankfort, two at Leipzig, one at Berlin, and one at Vienna. The first is political; the others are made up of selections from the French literary papers.

If we consider the German press, with reference to its influence and prosperity, we are proud to admit, that it is far below that of France: nor can it well be otherwise. The

weight of the censorship bears like an incubus upon all the German periodicals; and if some bold and master-spirits attempt to shake it off, the best thing they can do is to study to fall gracefully, like the gladiator. As for that swarm of writers, who live on a good understanding with the censors, their writings have always the same dull uniformity. Their whole labour consists in abridging the newest tales, with more or less taste. And with journals so composed, what difference can it make to a worthy citizen of Coburg, whether he receives a Munich, a Frankfort, or a Dresden journal? A political centre is wanting: the focus which generates and warms great political discussions, that powerful lever which moves a whole nation, exists in neither city. The first want, therefore, of the Coburg citizen would be to know how his Grand Duke is; next to read the appointment of the new Counsellor of state, then to ascertain what was talked of the day before at court, or at the residence of the minister. Nothing answers his purpose better than the small quarto journal, printed within a few yards of his own door, and in which he will find a summary of what is going on in the other states of Germany. To this, all the other papers are limited.

The literary journals are pretty nearly in the same predicament. The spirit of general decentralization existing in Germany, prevents the people of Berlin from acknowledging the supremacy of Vienna; those of Vienna, the supremacy of Stuttgart; those of Stuttgart, the supremacy of Leipzig. Each city will have its own libraries, its own literati, its own journals; and whilst, in France and England, the co-operation of many writers forms important periodicals, distinguished by the excellence, quantity, and variety of their matter, in each university, and in every petty town of Germany, there is a small journal written by two or three contributors, one of whom supplies a tale, another a few verses, a third a theatrical criticism; this fills a few numbers; and then they begin again with a new tale, a few more verses, and another theatrical criticism. Now mark the result:—the *Fremdwärter* of Berlin, whose editor, M. Hering, is certainly no ordinary man, has never been able to obtain six hundred subscribers; the circulation of the *Gesellschafter* is equally limited; and as for the secondary papers, they have done wonders if their sale ever reaches to two or three hundred.

Next come the Scientific journals, the University Annals, and the Miscellaneous, which, by the charms of a beautiful style, or by long standing, may pretend to an extensive sale. But here another difficulty arises, in the means of conveyance. There is no facility afforded by the post, as in France, where, for a single additional sou, a paper may be sent from one extremity of the kingdom to another. In Germany, there are no other means of evading the enormous duty levied by the post-office on every printed work, except either by sending, not single numbers, but collections of several successive numbers in the booksellers' parcels by the common carrier,—and the delay of such a mode of conveyance may easily be imagined; or by a regular subscription paid at the post-office, when the charge of postage is somewhat reduced. But, even then, the expense is very heavy; and this is, doubtless, one of the greatest obstacles to the German papers circulating far, or obtaining a great number of subscribers.

This obstacle becomes still more serious, when those papers are sent to foreign countries. Thus, according to the catalogue of the Berlin post, a French political paper costs the inhabitants of that city, half as much again as it sells for in France, and the French reviews one third more. This is the reason why the French periodicals have so small a circulation beyond the Rhine. It is a barrier opposed to the intercourse be-



tween two nations, who ought to make a more liberal and less interrupted interchange of ideas and labours. Why does not the French Government attempt to break down this barrier, and establish freedom of communication between the two states? It would tend to establish national friendship—the people of both nations would then know each other better, and mutually instruct each other. The Germans are as anxious as the French to get rid of these difficulties, which are a constant source of inconvenience to them in their trade, their correspondence, and their studies. There has been a great deal said and written about a treaty of correspondence between France and England, and this treaty ought to include foreign periodical journals, which are sold in London at double their original price. Hitherto, the French Government has been unable to overcome the scruples of the London Post-office. France borders upon Germany as well as upon England; and, moreover, in the present state of things, all considerations of distance disappear. Enlightened men of all nations are anxious to correspond with each other, without so heavy a tax upon the circulation of their thoughts and their writings.

#### OUR WEEKLY GOSSIP ON LITERATURE AND ART.

On Wednesday, when Sir Martin Archer Shee distributed the annual medals of the Royal Academy to the students, he complained that the Fine Arts were but indifferently encouraged. If we may judge from the small number of rewards given, the rising merit in the Academy is less than what is usual. The gold medal for the best original painting was withheld, though two candidates appeared; for the best copy of a picture by Vandyke, one silver medal was awarded, though three are often bestowed; and though five candidates were on the list for the best life-drawing, one medal, and that of the second class alone, was issued. The second medal too, was awarded in the antique. It is, however, some consolation to know, that the gold medal in sculpture was won fairly by Mr. Papworth, for a group from Homer; that the gold medal for the best original drawing in architecture, was gained by a very clever design for a Royal Exchange; and that other medals, of less value, were bestowed on subordinate subjects. There was, it is said, a manifest falling off in the beauty and originality of the drawings and models; and this, perhaps, took the President by surprise, for he neglected to describe where the weakness lay, and how it could best be remedied.

Mr. Burford is busily employed on a Panorama of Boothia, from drawings by Capt. Ross, and painted under his immediate inspection.

We are most happy to announce, that 'A History of English Literature,' by the elder D'Israeli, which, we understand, has been long in preparation, will appear in the course of the present season.

M. Guizot has written a circular to all the public libraries of France, for accounts of their treasures in books and MSS., with the view of appropriating them better—that is, for example, of sending books of voyages to the seaports, books of law to the great law schools, of manufactories to the manufacturing districts, and concentrating at Paris books and manuscripts of general interest. Thus Paris will have, in all probability, the eighty volumes of Letters of Cardinal Granville, the Minister of Charles V., which are preserved at Besançon. It is extraordinary, that Robertson should have written his History without a knowledge of their existence.

We are glad to find that the American system of prison discipline is attracting attention in Germany, and that the works of Messieurs Beaumont and Tocqueville upon this subject, have been translated from French into German.

The German litterati do not relax in their zeal for Spanish literature. Herr Boehl von Faber, a German member of the Spanish Royal Academy, who some time ago edited a collection of old Spanish lyrical pieces, has now published a collection of the oldest Spanish Dramas, anterior to the age of Lope de Vega, the productions of four poets who lived in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The celebrated Chinese scholar, Friedrich Rückert, has recently given his countrymen an admirable German version of many small Chinese poems.

Goethe's correspondence with Zelter during a period of thirty-six years, namely, from 1796 to 1832, is announced for immediate publication, with the somewhat awful addition, that it will amount to six goodly volumes.

We regret to announce the death of Dr. Jebb Bishop of Limerick, author of several valuable publications in divinity; the melancholy intelligence reached us so late that we are obliged to defer our notice of his life and writings till next week.

#### SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY

##### ROYAL SOCIETY.

Dec. 12.—Francis Bailey, Esq., V.P., in the chair.—Reports from Sir J. W. Herschell, Professor Airy and Captain Smith, on Professor Barlow's Telescopes with fluid refractors, were read. They praised its performance in several instances, but generally agreed, that when very high powers are used, it presents an ill-defined disc, and is disturbed by loose light and spectra. The same inference was deducible from the three reports,—that Professor Barlow has discovered a valuable principle in the construction of refracting telescopes, but that its practical application has not yet been sufficiently perfected.

A series of experiments on magnetic forces, made in the West Indies and South America, by James Napier, Esq., communicated by the Rev. Mr. Fisher, was laid before the Society. The details, though very important, possess no interest for general readers.

A communication from J. W. Lubbock, Esq., Treasurer and Vice President, 'On the Theory of the Moon,' was the last paper read; like the preceding, it was extremely valuable to men of science, but its merits could scarcely be explained to ordinary readers, without a lengthened commentary.

##### ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

Dec. 7.—The first general meeting of this Society, for the present session, was held this day, the Right Hon. Sir Alexander Johnston, V.P. in the chair.—A great number of donations received during the vacation, were laid on the table; and thanks were ordered to be returned to the respective donors. Lieut.-Col. Sykes, Thomas Newnham, Esq., and Samuel Cartwright, Esq., were elected Resident Members of the Society.

The paper read, was a communication from Mr. B. H. Hodgson, 'On the Law of Adultery in Nepal.'

Nepal being a Hindû state, its penal code is, of course, founded on the *Nastras*; nor is there anything material in the crimes which it recognizes, or the system or proofs which it allows, that may not be amply supported by the authority of Menû and other lawgivers, whose precepts are received as guides in judicial matters throughout Hindûstân. Two exceptions, however, are admitted to this general principle: the *Parbatiah* husband retains the privilege of avenging the dishonour of his marriage bed with his own hand, and Mohammedans are expressly confounded with the outcasts of the Hindû community. The foundation of the penal code being thus

proved to be the same, both in the hill territory and the plains, the author proceeds to trace the source of any existing difference between the Hindûism of the former and that of the latter country, considered as a public institution. The jealousy with which the distinction between Hindûs on the one hand, and outcasts of their own race and strangers, on the other, is preserved, prompts the administrators of the law, in Nepal, to visit with the utmost vengeance of the penal code every act by which this distinction is essentially and wilfully violated; and of all such acts, none is regarded with so much severity as sexual commerce between such parties, as tending to the confusion of all caste, and the almost interminable pollution of the society in which it occurs.

The further reading of this paper was postponed to the next meeting, 4th of January.

##### ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE.

Dec. 4.—The usual business of electing and proposing members, announcing presents, &c., having been completed, Mr. Hamilton read some extracts of a letter addressed to him, from Italy, by Sir W. Gell.

Sir William gave an account of the exhumation of the remains of Raphael, of which full particulars some time since appeared in the *Athenæum*. It was, however, mentioned in his letter that the remains have been deposited in a cedar case, to be placed in a sarcophagus of marble, presented for that purpose by the Pope.

It is known, that Raphael commenced a series of architectural designs, intended to represent a complete restoration of ancient Rome. These designs, Sir W. Gell writes, have been subjects of earnest inquiry at Rome, where a belief prevails, that they are preserved somewhere in England. It was communicated to the meeting by Mr. Hamilton, that the Society possesses a document, presented to it by the late W. Roscoe, Esq., in which they are described as existing in the Manuscript Library at Holkham.

The Secretary read a memoir, 'On the Royal names and titles on the Sarcophagus in the British Museum, formerly called the tomb of Alexander,' by the Rev. G. Tomlinson.

The hypothesis, maintained by the late Dr. Edward Clarke, which assigns this splendid Sarcophagus to Alexander the Great, has been long rejected; and it is now universally allowed, that its original tenant was one of the ancient Pharaohs. From an examination of the shields inscribed on the tomb, and on the other monuments remaining of him, published by the Society, Mr. Tomlinson has ascertained, that Horus, or more correctly Hor, was the name of this king; and he has no hesitation in placing him among the Bubastic Kings of the twenty-second dynasty, in which he stands as the immediate successor of Shishouk the First. His tomb, therefore, cannot be of a later date than about the middle of the tenth century before the Christian era.

Mr. Tomlinson has satisfactorily cleared up several difficulties, which hierologists have hitherto been obliged to leave unexplained, in relation to the legend of this king, in which he is styled "the victorious of the land of Heb;" and to his prænomen, as it appears on the monument. By Heb, he supposes, with Rosellini, is meant the greater Oasis. In the prænomen, as given by Rosellini, this prince is called Son of Neith; instead of which, the present writer proposes to read "Son of Pascht," the tutelary deity of the city of Bubastis, and of the Bubastie Kings.

The long hieroglyphical inscriptions with which the tomb is covered within and without, relate to the funeral rites of the Egyptians, in connexion with their peculiar notions respecting the transmigration of souls, in the case of their kings.

A second portion of Professor Schlegel's memoir 'On the Origin of the Hindûs,' concluded this day's reading.

#### ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

At a meeting of this Society on Monday evening, Captain Burns, of the East India Company's service, delivered, *visâ voce*, a very animated narrative of his travels through a portion of Central Asia, which has hitherto remained but little known to European geographers. The survey of the Indus, from the sea to Lahore, executed by this able officer, was communicated to the Society some months ago by the East India Company, together with a valuable memoir on the nations near the Indus, which we hope to see published in the forthcoming number of the Society's Transactions. Captain Burns having completed the survey of the Indus, crossed the Punjab to Câbul, and then proceeded by Bamian, a sequestered city, the antiquities of which are the most remarkable in the world, across the Hindoo Coosh, to Balkh and Bokhara, at which latter place he remained a month. Near Balkh he visited the grave of the enterprising and unfortunate Moorcroft. From Bokhara Captain Burns, crossing the Oxus a second time, directed his course westward, to the Caspian Sea, and then turning southwards through Persia, returned to India by the Persian Gulph; his route by land and water coinciding nearly with those followed by the army and the fleet of Alexander the Great. As Captain Burns is well acquainted with the Persian language, and carried instruments with him, a most valuable stock of information may be naturally supposed to have been collected by him in the course of this remarkable journey, to which we shall probably return in our next number.

#### SOCIETY OF ARTS.

Mr. Henry Wilkinson, a member of the Society, on Tuesday evening, delivered a very intelligent and interesting lecture, on "Ancient projectile Engines of Warfare." He began by observing, that the history of arms was closely connected with the history of the world from the earliest period, and that the fate of nations has always depended, either on the superiority of the arms employed, or the superior discipline and dexterity of those who used them, wholly independent of the numbers by which they were opposed. He adverted to many recorded examples, and particularly dwelt on the invariable success of the Roman infantry, in all their charges, from their peculiar method of using the sword and shield; the sword, which was two feet long, was used for thrusting only, similar to the use of our bayonet; and the shield, having a cross with a sharp spike in the centre, inflicted a mortal wound, while it defended the bearer. Mr. Wilkinson then commented on the use of the sling, which, he observed, ranked among the first of ancient offensive weapons; and he adduced many historical facts to prove, that, in fight, large stones were thrown with such violence that they seemed to be projected from a machine, and with an exactness as rarely to miss their aim—a circumstance not at all improbable, when it was known that children were so rigidly trained in the use of the implement, that their mothers would not allow them food until they struck it down from the top of a pole, with stones from their slings. He recited many interesting anecdotes connected with their use, and mentioned that the materials of which these slings were composed were chiefly flax, hair, or leather; that they were sometimes attached to sticks, which much increased their power. In speaking of the battering ram and balista, Mr. Wilkinson observed, that the latter bore the same relation to the sling as cannon to muskets and other small fire-arms.

Mr. Wilkinson next adverted to the use of

the bow, which, he remarked, might be traced to the earliest times in the history of almost every country. He quoted the Old Testament, setting forth the earliest instance where the use of the bow is implied. He observed, that the Grecians derived their knowledge of the bow from the Scythians, and that the Cretan bows were celebrated among them. He described the construction and way of using the Persian bows, and stated, that the Laplanders, who subsist almost entirely by hunting, excel in the art of making bows. He also adduced many records, proving the extent to which an arrow, stone, or bullet, might be dispatched; and related several remarkable feats of Adam Bell, and Clymme of the Clough, also of Robin Hood and Little John. He excited the risibility of his audience not a little, by narrating the story told by Firdausi, the Homer of Persia, that a hero called Abrish ascended to the top of a mountain, and sent an arrow to the banks of the Oxus, a distance of between five and six hundred miles. A Persian historian, recording the fact, admits that it is incomprehensible, and adds, that the arrow was discharged at "sunrise and did not fall till noon."!!!

Mr. Wilkinson went at much length into the powerful and never-failing effects of the battering ram, and described its force compared with modern artillery. He observed, that it was frequently used in the fourteenth century, and that Sir Christopher Wren employed it in demolishing the walls of the old Church of St. Paul's. He enumerated various instruments of war, and concluded his address, in order to connect ancient with modern artillery, with a brief account of the discovery of gunpowder.

Several ancient and very curious implements of warfare were exhibited, for which Mr. Wilkinson acknowledged himself indebted to the Hon. Board of Ordnance.

*Medico-Botanica Society, Nov. 10.*—Professor Burnett in the chair.—Dr. Ryan brought before the society, the result of his practice in various diseases, in which he had employed the newly introduced alkali, which the French chemists have discovered in the Nux Vomica, and to which they had given the name of Strychnine. He stated, that in St. Vitus' dance, in epilepsy, and in palsy, he had tried it with uniform success, and that in dyspeptic states of the stomach he had been equally successful. He found that the sixth or eighth part of a grain was sufficient to produce very considerable influence; nor had he seen, at any time, any evil consequence follow upon its use. Dr. James Johnson stated, that he had come to a very different conclusion from Dr. Ryan; and he owed it to the Society to express his opinion, that it was not only an uncertain, but, under some circumstances, a very dangerous remedy. Dr. Sigmund said, he had tried the Strychnine, sometimes with favourable results, but altogether he was more inclined to abandon the use of the remedy. His principal reason was, that it was seldom to be obtained of a uniform strength. Indeed, he felt the greatest unwillingness, at all times, to employ medicines of extraordinary power, from a feeling that he could not depend upon the genuineness or the uniformity of the medicines he prescribed. The druggists' shops ought to be under the immediate controul of the College of Physicians; besides which, the College ought to give certain directions for the gathering herbs and preparing them, and have a properly digested Pharmacopœia,—not, as at present, merely a collection of scientific preparations;—but a complete manual of useful and simple directions. The gathering herbs at a due season was of the deepest importance; it had been proved in the Society, that a plant gathered in the spring might be perfectly inert, yet would be poisonous in the autumnal season. Mr. Gilbert Burnett coincided with the views just expressed. Strych-

nine obtained from the Nux Vomica, would vary essentially from that obtained from the Ignatius bean; whilst the Upas tree of Java, relative to which so many fabulous tales had been disseminated, really contained none at all. Pelletier had just proved this to be the case; indeed, after all the marvels that had been related of this tree, of its causing the instantaneous extinction of animal and vegetable life, that neither man, beast, nor vegetable, could exist within a certain limit of the spot where it grew, it was now found to be perfectly innocent of those dreadful effects; and that recent observations had proved, that the Valley of Death, as it was called in Java, owed its destructive power to a mephitic gas which it exhaled, similar to that from the Grotto del Cane, and which certainly had given rise to the tales of travellers, and to the beautiful poetry of Darwin, who had given scope to imagination. Some observations were then made on the Ilicine in the cure of ague, by Dr. Ryan; its efficacy was discussed, as a substitute for Quinine, and the general opinion was favourable to it. The Society then adjourned until January 12.

#### MEETINGS FOR THE ENSUING WEEK.

MOS.	Phrenological Society	Eight, P.M.
	Medical Society	Eight, P.M.
	Harveian Society	Eight, P.M.
TUES.	Philological Society	Seven, P.M.
	Linnæan Society	Eight, P.M.
WED.	Geological Society	Eight, P.M.
	Society of Arts	Eight, P.M.
TH.	Royal Society of Literature	Three, P.M.
	Royal Society	Eight, P.M.
	Society of Antiquaries	Eight, P.M.
SAT.	Westminster Medical Society	Eight, P.M.

#### PARIS ACADEMY OF SCIENCES.

*Sitting of the 25th of November.*

A memoir by M. Chevalier was read, On the employment of hot air, as the means of producing evaporation in the refining and making of sugar, distilling, &c.; he represents the hot air as preferable to steam, for many reasons. First, because it gives much less molasses, and more sugar; secondly, because the evaporation is much quicker; thirdly, because the sugar produced is finer; and, lastly, because the hot air may serve other purposes, as heating rooms, &c. which steam cannot.

M. Becquerel presented a report on a memoir of M. Fournet, respecting the carbonates of lead, white and black. He has examined them chiefly in their natural state, and considered particularly their situation relatively to the sulphuret of lead, or common lead ore. His researches had not as yet yielded any definitive results, further than some curious remarks on the area and mode of formation of these minerals: but the reporter considered M. Fournet as engaged in a track likely to lead to important discoveries.

M. Delille read a memoir on the Phosphorus mushroom, which grows chiefly amongst olive trees, called the *Agarie de l'olivier*.

Another memoir, that seemed to excite a good deal of interest, was that of Mr. Milne Edwards, on the changes of form experienced by certain crustacea in infancy. It seemed to show that in formation and development articulated animals follow nearly the same laws as do those of the higher classes. But one exception to this was mentioned.

Dec. 2.—M. Brongniart is elected Professor of Botany, in the place of M. Desfontaines, deceased. Dr. Warwick calls the attention of the Academy to his new microscopes. Mr. Walsh, of Cork, sends a memoir, of which he demands the insertion in the *Journal des Savans*, as a right, not a favour. A report upon a memoir by M. Payen, upon manures, next occupies the Academy, and contains some curious facts. "The best manner of employing animal manure," says M. Payen, "consists in rendering its decomposition gradual." If it be buried simply, its

rotting produces at first a quantity of carbonic acid, which the grain sown with it, or near it, cannot imbibe or take advantage of; whilst, in some time after, when the grain has germinated, and requires the nutritious gas, this has all evaporated from the manure, which has decomposed too quickly. This is obviated, if the animal matter is mingled at once with animal charcoal; that retards the decomposition, and allows the nutritious acid to escape in proportion with the growth and wants of the grain. Thus, 85 parts of animal charcoal with 15 of dry blood, will produce more effect as manure, than 100 parts of dry blood,—that is, blood alone. The power of the latter is sextupled by the charcoal; yet the charcoal furnishes none of the carbonic acid. On this principle, M. Payen strongly recommends the use of the black, proceeding from sugar refineries, which contains a certain degree of the blood used in the purification of the sugar. This, to be manure, must, however, be stripped of its sugar, which would obstruct all vegetation. The use of animal charcoal also renders the employment of that manure, which a city affords profitable immediately, as well as devoid of odour. As to bones, M. Payen finds them fertilizing when cleaned of their grease, but not otherwise.

## FINE ARTS

*Turner's Annual Tour.* Moon, Boys, & Graves. This is a truly beautiful work; Turner has exerted himself, knowing he had rivals in the market, and the efforts of his pencil have been well aided by the graver. The painter, like the pilots of old, never loses sight of shore; he knows how strong he is between the wet and the dry: only one of these twenty drawings belongs wholly to land—we have water, salt or fresh, in all the others. Do we object to this? Quite the reverse. We are true islanders: the Britannia of our fancy sits on Dover Cliffs, with one foot in the sea and the other on land, resolved to take to the ocean. There is not one indifferent print in the series; but our favourites are 'The Light Towers of the Heve'; 'Harfleur'; 'Lillebonne'; 'Tancarville'; 'Scene between Quillebeuf and Villequier'; 'Rouen at a distance'; 'Rouen from the River.' The two latter are engraved by Miller, in a style which few can surpass; Brandard, too, has wrought happily; indeed, all the scenes are skilfully engraved; the effect and the spirit of Turner are everywhere retained.

*Fifty-six Engravings, Illustrative of 'The Pleasures of Memory and other Poems,' by Samuel Rogers.* London: Moon & Co. Of these exquisite engravings we have spoken in another department of our paper.

*Illustrations of the Sacred Annual.* London: Turmill.

The Sacred Annual is a fourth edition of Mr. Robert Montgomery's poem, 'The Messiah.' The illustrations, ten in number, are after designs by Martin, Haydon, Franklin, Clayton, Von Holst, and Etty, and are coloured in imitation of the original pictures, with a beautifully illuminated missal title-page by Mr. Dudley Costello. We are not partial to coloured engravings, but certainly there is a gaiety and effect about them, that, with the novel, and indeed beautiful, portfolio in which these are contained, will, we imagine, make this work welcome to many a drawing-room table. We are unwilling to offer any cold critical opinion, and shall, therefore, recommend our fair readers to ask for the work, and decide for themselves.

*Tombleson's Fieus of the Rhine.* Edited by W. G. Fearnside. London: Tombleson.

This is an extraordinary volume. It is a noble looking octavo, handsomely bound in imitation of morocco, with gilt-edged leaves, and it contains no less than sixty-nine engravings, with a

panoramic map of the river, and is sold for 16s. The engravings, of course, are not to be looked at as works of high art, but they are creditable, and the views satisfactory and accurate; and the accompanying description by Mr. Fearnside is written with simplicity and good sense.

## THEATRICALS

## OLYMPIC THEATRE.

NOVELTIES spring up at this house like mushrooms—but while they continue like them to be palatable, and while Madame la Cuisinière-en-chef continues to dress them as nicely, and serve them up as tastily, as she has hitherto done, the public will do anything but complain. A burlesque, in one act, called 'Fighting by Proxy,' was acted for the first time on Monday last. The hands of the public have inscribed it on the long list of Olympic successes—and it has taken its place with other new pieces, which are filling the house nightly with those who "have crossed their hands with a bit of silver," as the fair lessee—we mean the dark lessee, tells them every evening in her gipsy character. Mr. Liston and Mr. Keeley personate two cowards, and each is capital in his way. Mr. Kenney is the author; and the mere circumstance of this clever and experienced dramatist's becoming desirous of writing for the little Olympic, is a compliment, though we must say, a well-deserved one, to the manager for the excellent style in which her establishment is conducted.

## MISCELLANEA

*The Scingraphicon.*—This is a new and ingenious puzzle, and it has the additional advantage of being instructive as well as amusing. With the principle the public were before familiar: a long ill-shaped horizontal painting seen from a particular point of view becomes, according to known laws of perspective, an upright building and the strange proportions then harmonize so admirably, that it excites in young people equal surprise and admiration.

*New Patent Steam Boiler and Carriage.*—We have this week seen at work, a small steam-engine, with a boiler upon an entirely new and improved principle, the invention of Mr. W. H. James, of this town, civil engineer. The engine has, through the kindness of Mr. James, been exhibited in the course of the last few weeks to many gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood, who expressed their entire approbation of its principles and operations. We understand there is an intention of speedily forming a public company for the manufacture of engines and boilers upon this principle, and suited to the several purposes we have enumerated. We should mention that Mr. James also showed to us a steam carriage, which is in a state of forwardness, and which is intended to travel on the common roads.—*Birmingham Journal.*

*African Expedition.*—We observe, by a paragraph in *The Albion*, that the expedition had returned to Fernando Po, and that Lander may be shortly expected in England.

*Mr. Sergeant's Sale of Pictures.*—This sale took place at the auction-room of Messrs. Southgate, on Thursday and Friday, the 5th and 6th inst.; in consequence of a fracas which took place; we are requested to insert the following letters:—

To Ralph Bernal, Esq., M.P., &c. &c.

SIR,—At the sale of Mr. Sergeant's property yesterday, by Messrs. Southgate & Co., a circumstance of a very unpleasant nature arose from an observation made by Mr. Roberts, of Percy Street, respecting a drawing, "Lot 113. A female seated near to a well, with tree, &c."—viz. "that the drawing was not by Austin, but a copy made from the original by Miss Dawson." I should not have felt it my duty to make any observations on this statement, however untrue or misjudged, had I not sold this identical drawing to Mr. Sergeant as a genuine specimen of Austin. I felt my character to be compromised, as I was at the moment assuring a gentleman at my side, who had asked my opinion, that

I believed the drawing to be an Austin, and recommended him to purchase, if he desired to possess a drawing made by that artist. Thus circumstanced, it became my unavoidable duty to state with equal publicity, "that some mistake must exist, as the drawing had been sold by Mr. Roberts, of Percy Street, to the gentleman of whom I received it, as a drawing by Austin; and that I had sold it also as such to Mr. Sergeant." Mr. Roberts replied, "he had not sold it as an Austin;" to which I answered, "You certainly did." He then said, "YOU ARE A LIAR." I silently seated myself.

Now Sir, I am exceedingly sorry that your kind patronage to me, should involve a necessity of bringing your name forward, but, as it was mentioned at the sale, no alternative remains. I must either consent to be degraded and insulted publicly, or look to you for confirmation of the statement I have made.

I remain, Sir,  
Your obliged servant,  
D. T. WHITE.

332, Oxford Street.

Regent Circus, Dec. 10th, 1833.

Mr. Bernal having been applied to, by Mr. D. T. White, for information respecting a drawing which he had from Mr. Bernal, in exchange for other drawings, now begs to state, in answer to Mr. D. T. White, that the drawing, of a subject of a female seated near to a well, with tree, &c. was purchased by Mr. Bernal of Mr. Roberts, of Percy Street, as a drawing by Mr. Austin, the artist; and he, Mr. Bernal, has already produced to Mr. D. T. White the account of Mr. Roberts, in which the said drawing is included, and entered as an "AUSTIN."

To Mr. D. T. White.

## METEOROLOGICAL JOURNAL

Days of W.A. Mon.	Thermom. Max. Min.	Baromet. Noon.	Winds.	Weather.
Thur. 5	51 38	29.43	S.W.	Cloudy.
Frid. 6	51 38	29.40	S.W.	Ditto.
Sat. 7	53 36	29.05	SW to S.W.n.	Rain.
Sun. 8	58 38	29.85	N. to S.W.n.	Cloudy.
Mon. 9	56 40	29.35	S.W. to W.	Rain.
Tues. 10	48 30	29.55	S.W.	Cloudy.
Wed. 11	46 33	29.35	N.W.	Rain, &c.

*Prevailing Clouds.*—Cirrostratus, Cirrus, Cumulostratus, Cirrocumulus, Nimbus.

Nights and Mornings, for the greater part, fair. Mean temperature of the week, 50.5°. Greatest variation, 25°.—Mean atmospheric pressure, 29.20. Days decreased on Wednesday 8 h. 42 m.

Summary of last week's journal, which was forwarded too late for publication:—Mean temperature, 47°. Mean atmospheric pressure, 29.125. Winds Westerly. Days fair, excepting Thursday.—Prevailing clouds, Cirrostratus, Cumulostratus.

## NOVELTIES IN LITERATURE AND ART.

Professor Heeren's Manual of the History of Modern Europe, will be published in a few days.

Metrical Exercises upon Scripture Texts, and Miscellaneous Poems, by Miss H. E. King.

An Ecclesiastical Historical Digest, Chronologically arranged, from the Origin of Christianity to the Present Time, by E. C. Batley, A.M., M.A.S.

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Just published.—Stalman's Real Property Act, royal 12mo. 6s.—East India Register and Directory for 1834, 10s.—Rev. G. Townsend's Chronological Arrangement of Old and New Testaments, 1 vol. 8vo. 14. 4s.—Baradiston, a Tale of the Seventeenth Century, 3 vols. post 8vo. 14. 11s. 6d.—Olympia Morata, her Times, Life, and Writings, by the Author of 'Selwyn,' &c. royal 18mo. 8s.—The Philosophical Rambler, or a Pedestrian Tourist through France and Italy, 8vo. 12s.—The Ocean Bride, a Tale of the Sea, by M. S. Milton, 12mo. 6s.—The Revivalist, for 1833, (forming vol. 2.) 18mo. 2s. 6d.—Farmer Goodall and his Friends, by the Author of 'The Week,' 2s. 6d.—Gallaudet's History of Jonah, plates, 18mo. 2s. 6d.—Zara, or the Black Death, Poems by the Author of 'Naufragus,' 8vo. 7s.—Dr. Nolan's Hampton Lectures, 8vo. 15s.—Seedings Smith's Chancery Practice, 8vo. Part I. 10s.—Grant Thorburn's Forty Years in America, royal 18mo. 6s.—Sharpnell's Anatomy of the Human Bones, royal folio, Part I. 5s.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

P. A.—Jacques—Z.—Stanzas—An Old Country Subscriber—F. F.—H. M. L.—Maro—J. S.—A Friend to Candour, &c.; received.

We have received two letters on the subject of King's College and the London University. The one signed C. D., should have been inserted, had the writer communicated to us confidentially his name, and satisfied us that his statements were made on good authority.



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